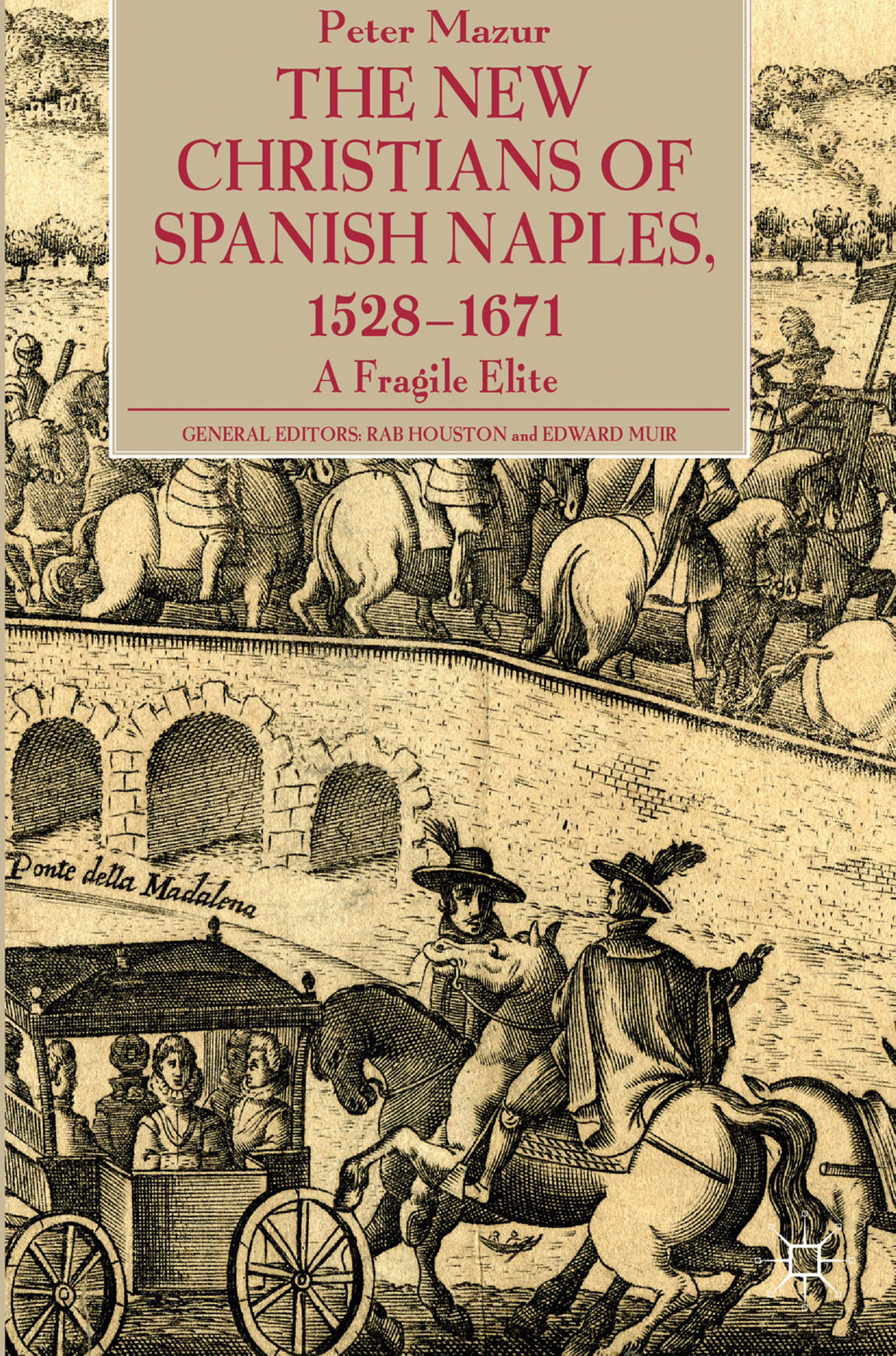


EARLY MODERN HISTORY: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Peter Mazur

# THE NEW CHRISTIANS OF SPANISH NAPLES, 1528–1671 A Fragile Elite

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# The New Christians of Spanish Naples 1528–1671

A Fragile Elite

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# List of Abbreviations

ACDF	Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Vatican City
AGOP	Archivum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum, Rome
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
ANTT	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon
ARSI	Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome
ASDN	Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli, Naples
ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City
ASVe	Archivio di Stato, Venice
BNN	Biblioteca Nazionale, Naples
BNR	Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome



# Introduction

In one of many genealogical texts written about the aristocratic families of the kingdom of Naples during the second half of the seventeenth century, the lawyer Biagio Aldimari included an entry on the Beltran, a Spanish clan whose origins he traced as far back as the eighth century: “According to Pedro di Portogallo in his book of nobility, this family originated from one of the five companions of Count Mendo, of the blood of the Gothic kings, a close relative of King Aistulf, and a descendant of King Theodoric.” The Beltran, he claimed, were descended from one of the five companions of Mendo who defended his territory in northern Spain during a far-off epoch when the Christian ruling class of Iberia was formed and made its claim to leadership against the still advancing Ummayyad caliphate. They belonged to an extremely small group of *hidalgos* who were present at the earliest beginnings of the Catholic monarchy, and whose privileges and authority were beyond question. When they came to the kingdom of Naples, they did so as its rightful conquerors.

In fact, the Beltran had no such origins. They arrived in Naples toward the end of the fifteenth century or at the beginning of the sixteenth not as knights, but most likely as merchants, and purchased the titles and feudal rights to Mesagne, a small property in Apulia, and the titles which went along with it, according them an aristocratic status. They were also, as was revealed during the course of an inquisitorial trial in the 1570s, *conversos* or New Christians,<sup>1</sup> the descendants of converted Jews who had left Spain to pursue their fortune at the court of the Spanish viceroys and enjoy the respite that the Kingdom of Naples offered from the intolerant atmosphere of Iberia, and where in a relatively brief period of time they managed to acquire significant personal fortunes. The same was true of the Villagut, another family included



in the collection that Aldimari associated with the counts of Barcelona who reconquered Catalonia from the Moors in 714.<sup>2</sup>

It is unclear whether Aldimari's false genealogies were the result of mistaken identity or deliberate choice. It is certain that he had an interest in disguising the true origins of these two families in order to remove a potential dark spot in the past of his most important clients, the Carafa, for whom he produced a magnificent three volume history replete with intricate diagrams and engraved portraits of the numerous military heroes, statesmen, and ecclesiastical figures who belonged to the family, including one pope and an array of cardinals. The daughter of Alfonso Beltran, Brianda, had married a minor member of the Carafa, and their son, also named Alfonso, was brought up as a cardinal in the curia of his great uncle Paul IV before becoming archbishop of Naples. Another branch of the Carafa had allowed a marriage with the Villagut during the same period, and a cleansing of the ethnic and religious identity of these families would not have been at all displeasing to his patrons.<sup>3</sup>

In either case, Aldimari's text is testimony of a historical silence, a combination of intentional censorship and the obliteration of time, that has removed almost all memory of the New Christians who migrated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to what was at the time one of the most populous cities in Europe and the capital of the largest territorial state in Italy. It is a silence in which the New Christians themselves were complicit, and which, save a few exceptions, persists to the present day. Despite the existence of a vast modern historiography on the city of Naples, this group has remained hidden, largely due to the inaccessibility of important materials, in particular inquisitorial trials and correspondence, which have only been made available to scholars within the last decade.

The following is an attempt to reconstruct the history of this community, from their arrival in the city during a period of political upheaval at the end of the fifteenth century, to their capture of important roles in the government and financial administration of the city and kingdom of Naples under the nascent Spanish regime, and the difficult coexistence that they negotiated with both the native inhabitants of the city and its Spanish overlords until assimilation and changing historical circumstances brought an end to the converso presence in the city at the turn of the eighteenth century. It is a story inextricably tied to that of the Spanish monarchy and the Spanish regime in Naples, as the conversos owed their roles in Neapolitan society to their Iberian background and their ties to the viceroys of the kingdom, who found in them an essential



group of collaborators, bureaucrats who managed the nascent ministries of a centralized state, judges and lawyers who crafted and debated its laws, doctors who attended on the members of the viceroy's family and the court, and above all financiers who provided capital to a treasury in constant need of revenue. Beginning with Pompeo Colonna, the cardinal and *condottiere* who subdued the kingdom in 1528 after a French incursion, and ending with the Marqués del Carpio, who oversaw the city from 1683 to 1687 as it descended into a vortex of aristocratic vendetta and challenges to the authority of the state, nearly all of the viceroys maintained personal contacts with New Christians, often in full awareness of their identity as such, and offered them considerable wealth and privileges for their service.

But these relationships were characterized by a fundamental ambiguity. The conversos had fled Spain for Naples, but they found there a government at the service of the Spanish Empire that fully participated in its drive to purify the world of heresy and irreligion and invoked the same ideology of *reconquista* and religious intolerance in its self-representations.<sup>4</sup> The government in Naples had put an end to the millennial presence of Jews in southern Italy with an expulsion decree in 1541, and the city served as one of the principal launching sites for the naval crusade against the Ottoman Empire that led to the battle of Lepanto in 1571. And while the recurring project of installing a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in the kingdom failed on more than one occasion, the local regime gave its support to the Roman Inquisition, the papal tribunal responsible for prosecuting crimes against the faith, including that of converting or reconverting from Christianity to Judaism.

All of these factors made the existence of the New Christians in Naples a fragile one; even as they moved rapidly up the social ladder, acquiring wealth, privileges, and titles, they remained vulnerable to the accusation of crypto-Judaism, a significant weakness that was exploited by their enemies on numerous occasions. It was a condition which rendered the conversos simultaneously "agents and victims of Empire" in Jonathan Israel's succinct phrase, and placed them in a similar situation to Jews and New Christians in other locations across the Spanish and Portuguese Empires.<sup>5</sup> Alongside the promise of extraordinary economic and social opportunity, Naples held the threat of inquisitorial procedures, public humiliation, and personal and familial ruin.



Two successive waves of New Christians arrived in the city. The first, largely of Aragonese origin, came at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, fleeing an increasingly hostile climate in Spain and recognizing opportunity in the expanding state bureaucracy that the Aragonese monarchs, and after them the Spanish viceroys, were creating in the city. The *nazione catalana*, as it came to be known, met with extraordinary success as merchants and financiers, and found an ally in the viceroy Pedro de Toledo, who relied on their resources and administrative skills even as he engineered the expulsion of the Jewish population of the kingdom and attempted to found a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition. The leading representative of this group was Alfonso Sanchez, who became treasurer-general of the kingdom, and accumulated a vast fortune through his participation in the financial transactions of the state. Sanchez and his circle were a group of educated, well-connected financiers who performed essential services for the viceroy as he attempted to create a centralized state in a kingdom which had always been known for its entrenched nobility and resistance to royal authority. For Sanchez and a number of other families in his circle, collaboration with the viceroy opened the door to membership in the aristocracy and assimilation into the highest levels of Neapolitan society.

In the seventeenth century, this process repeated itself, as a group of Portuguese conversos came to the city in the wake of the unification of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns in 1580. The Vaaz clan, led by their patriarch Miguel, offered their enormous resources in a moment of extreme financial need for the viceroyalty. Under the protection of the Duke of Lemos, Vaaz presided over the first and only major reform of the finances of the kingdom of Naples, and reaped enormous benefits. He managed to create a monopoly on the sale of grain to the capital and became lord of a small but dynamic feudal state in Apulia centered on the Adriatic port of Mola. Miguel Vaaz's heirs remained protagonists of public life in the city and kingdom, occupying important positions in the magistracy and military while continuing to manage the vast array of commercial interests that the patriarch had put in place; several other Portuguese families followed the same route to wealth and social affirmation during the same years. Between the arrival of the army of Ferdinand the Catholic in 1503 and the takeover of the kingdom by the Austrian crown in 1709, there was almost no time in which conversos were not present in the city, and no time in which their relationship with the viceroy did not represent a key element in its political equilibria. Throughout this period, the conversos were an



élite within the kingdom that lived in a symbiotic relationship with the viceroys.

However, despite the success that the New Christians encountered in Naples, the accusation that they were continuing to practice Judaism in secret followed them constantly and became a concrete threat when the Roman Inquisition launched two massive investigations of the converso community, the first in 1569–1581 and the second from 1657 to 1661. These two investigations, carefully supervised by the cardinals of the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office, were at times violent, and included episodes of torture and capital punishment. They affected, directly or indirectly, almost all of the New Christian families living in the city. Yet, while the Inquisition represented a threat to the New Christians, it was incapable of unraveling the close network of protection that the group had formed in the city, or of completely undermining their social status and political influence. The conversos who possessed the necessary resources to defend themselves against the Holy Office were able to negotiate skillfully with the supposedly incorruptible tribunal, limiting as much as possible the damage to their lives and property. At the same time, their trials threatened the fragile political equilibrium in Naples and created tensions between the viceroys and the officials of the Inquisition, which on several occasions required the involvement of the highest authorities of church and state. Neither campaign ended without damaging the reputation and lives of the New Christians, but neither was a complete victory for the Holy Office. Some accused families were able to recover their status after humiliating trials and sentences, while others exhausted their inquisitors through endless obstruction and appeals. The history of the New Christians in Naples demonstrates eloquently that conversos were not perennial victims, and that the Holy Office was not all-powerful. Instead, the inquisitorial investigations, for all of their violence, spectacle, and propaganda, seem to have done little to interrupt the continuity of the New Christian presence in Naples. There is no evidence that any of the converso families decided to flee the city after the Inquisition had tried them, and many of them remained long afterward as important landholders, officials in government, and even ecclesiastical figures.

That such an unusual arrangement was possible was due in part to the peculiar character of the Neapolitan state and its relationship with the society that surrounded it. The work of several generations of historians of early modern Naples has demonstrated how the city under Spanish rule was a polity well-integrated into the European system of states, where the local barons who had controlled much of the kingdom's



territory during the middle ages slowly gave away their autonomy to allow the installation of functioning centralized institutions under the control of the Spanish viceroy and a new corps of bureaucrats and jurists in the capital.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, viceregal government was highly personalistic, and the institutions designed to keep the city under royal control, such as the Council of Italy and the visitors who were sent regularly to inspect and reform the governing institutions of the kingdom, often struggled to effectively dictate policy.<sup>7</sup> Instead, as a predominantly Spanish group of researchers has emphasized, a complex series of familial, personal, and factional relationships bound the court politics of Spain and the administration of the Spanish viceroyalty in Southern Italy: important decisions and shifts in Spanish policy in Naples were often influenced by factional intrigue in Spain.<sup>8</sup>

The conversos performed a central role in these processes, by guaranteeing the function of a key aspect of the Spanish viceregal state, its financial operations. As bureaucrats and financiers well-versed in Iberian practices of government and with few ties to Italian society, they provided a strong element of continuity for a viceroyalty that could find few reliable local allies and which could not immediately depend on a local bureaucracy to support it. Of the many ties that bound Madrid and Valladolid to Naples in the early modern period, conversos were undoubtedly among the most significant. By itself, their story emphasizes the degree to which the Spanish Empire was built on compromise and collaboration with its subjects, as well as on personal and informal accords that could fill the gaps left open by unwieldy institutions or delayed communication between center and periphery. More than a marginal group or an isolated minority, New Christians in Naples were a central part of the imperial strategy of Spain, and their history forces us to rethink dichotomies that have longed formed a part of the historiography of the Mediterranean. Their presence at the highest levels of the Neapolitan state undermines simplistic characterizations of a Spanish monarchy, aided by the Inquisition, determined to persecute or marginalize what appeared to be remnants of Judaism left after the expulsion. While the relationship between the two was far from peaceful, periods of hostility and persecution punctuated other moments, often long-lasting, of cooperation and mutual dependence.

\* \* \*

The decision to study the conversos of Naples as a distinct community, a group of individuals bound together by common ethnic and



religious heritage, is a choice that necessitates reading the sources from a different perspective than the one usually adopted by specialists in the period. Inquisitorial trials, the richest and most abundant source material regarding the history of the converso minority, but also the most problematic, can be read not only as records of religious intolerance or as testimony of religious practices, but also as documents of connections between individuals, families, and institutions. Together with other administrative records, narrative sources, and genealogical records, they provide the basis for a partial reconstruction of converso society in Naples, and allow an understanding that penetrates the many fictions and distortions employed by the New Christians themselves, inquisitors, and other witnesses alike. The problem of converso religious identity intersected with the issues of their wealth and economic role, status, and political influence, and an accurate understanding of their religious positions must necessarily take into account the social and economic loyalties and divisions which governed their lives. Rather than focusing on the most unreliable aspect of inquisitorial testimony, confessions of crypto-Jewish belief and practice, I have used it for data regarding the social and familial background of the suspects and witnesses, and whenever possible, compared it to material from other sources.

What emerges is a picture of a society in which conversos existed as a distinct minority, but did little to announce their identity and often did much to disguise it, regardless of whether or not they were involved in the secret practice of Judaism. There were no converso corporations or confraternities that announced their presence among the groups and civic institutions of sixteenth-century Naples, but there was nevertheless a degree of solidarity, intermarriage, and collaboration in business and political affairs that made their presence felt in the city. There were undeniably conversos in Naples who practiced crypto-Judaism and who maintained contact with Jews. This is ultimately of lesser importance than the fact that their ethnic and religious heritage made them vulnerable to the accusation of apostasy, a fact which by itself imposed unity upon the group.

This research joins that of a growing number of scholars who have shifted their gaze beyond the question of converso religious identity and toward an understanding of the place that they occupied in the societies of Spain and Portugal and their territories across the globe. Though they could be found in the countryside, conversos were especially prominent in urban areas, where they occupied skilled trades and professions, ranging from municipal and royal service to mercantile activity. As Kevin

Ingram has noted, "Conversos may have been a social minority, but they held a prominent place in the professional and economic life of Spain's most important urban centers..."<sup>9</sup> And as a social group, they were controversial as much for their local ambitions as for suspicion of their religious tendencies. Francisco Marquez Villanueva, in a series of seminal articles, demonstrated that the conversos' role in civic life, and particularly in municipal government, was as much a factor in creating a social stigma against them as their perceived religious habits, and many of the most vicious aspects of anti-converso prejudice, such as the blood purity statutes, arose in the midst of political struggles that had no obvious religious background.<sup>10</sup>

Focused research on the role of conversos in individual urban contexts in sixteenth-century Spain has largely confirmed the insights of Marquez Villanueva. Studies of some of Iberia's most important urban centers and minor rural communities have demonstrated the variety of ways in which the distinction between Old and New Christian was fundamental in ways that extend far beyond the simple question of religious beliefs and practices. In cities across Spain, groups of conversos formed informal yet powerful factions and business consortia that made their presence an issue of social and political importance. In Toledo, Linda Martz describes the existence of a large and economically significant group of conversos who gradually recovered from the inquisitorial persecutions of the early sixteenth century to wage a struggle for status and political offices. Seville, the city that saw the opening of the first tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in 1487 and became the main point of entry for Spain's Atlantic trade, was also home to a significant converso minority that occupied key roles in local government and commerce, and was at the center of numerous local controversies throughout the sixteenth century, including the one provoked by the discovery of a network of evangelicals in the city in the 1550s. In the seventeenth century, a new group of conversos appeared in Seville, operators in a network of Portuguese merchants and financiers stretching from Madrid to Mexico.<sup>11</sup>

In many cases, it was the very question of converso participation in local politics and economic activity that unleashed the Inquisition against them. Jaime Contreras' 1992 monograph on a massive inquisitorial campaign in Murcia demonstrates through careful analysis of trial records how a bitter struggle for control over municipal offices unleashed a bloody and undisciplined series of investigations that attracted the attention of the central authorities of the Spanish Inquisition and resulted in a revision of some of the sentences; the



damage to the Inquisition's reputation was lasting. The still poorly understood "conspiracy of Beja", an inquisitorial campaign provoked by a series of false denunciations and manipulated testimony in the 1570s seems to have originated from similar tensions and ended with similar results for the Portuguese Holy Office.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, other research has begun to shed light on another characteristic of the converso minority, both in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires and beyond: their mobility and skill at forming complex trade networks based on a combination of common interest, familial connections, and religious and ethnic solidarity. Jonathan Israel has traced the two-centuries-long history of what he calls "the diasporas within a diaspora", the migrations of conversos and Sephardic Jews around the globe, on the heels of the expansion of the major European maritime empires – Spanish, Portuguese, Venetian, Dutch, English, and French. These Jews and New Christians shared a common Iberian linguistic and cultural background, and in many cases familial ties, and they were more successful than any other group at establishing international trade networks that crossed all of the major religious and military frontiers present in the early modern period.<sup>13</sup> Their parental links and common identity served them well in the creation of extensive networks of trade and finance, and in the seventeenth century, they even displaced the Genoese banks as the main backers of the debt of the Spanish crown. The Sephardic Jews and New Christians in the global diaspora led at times a precarious existence, in which the opportunity for tremendous profits and privilege coexisted with the threat of religious persecution or political reversals that could destroy in a short time what had sometimes taken several lifetimes to acquire. They lived in circumstances that prized adaptability, ambiguity, and ability to mediate and translate across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Studies of the converso and Jewish communities in contexts as disparate as the Malabar coast of India, Brazil, West Africa, and the Maghreb reveal the presence of Jewish and converso communities whose members had cultivated the same habits of survival as they attempted to negotiate a coexistence with both their local hosts and their imperial backers.<sup>14</sup>

The history of the Neapolitan community contains elements of both these stories. Many of the New Christians depended on their education and their training and familiarity with Iberian institutions and legal systems. They lived in what was, after all, a kingdom that formed part of the Habsburg possessions, and their success depended in part on their ability to move easily in both the largely Castilian court of the viceroy and the tribunals, administrative bodies, and commercial and financial

arenas that were under local control. But they were also merchants and financiers whose value to the Neapolitan government consisted in their ability to bring capital from faraway places and serve the needs of the state for loans, the same function that the Jews of the kingdom of Naples and the Sephardic Jewish refugees who took up residence there for a brief period had performed before them. These merchants and financiers, especially in the seventeenth century, did as much of their business beyond the kingdom's borders as within it – in the major Italian ports, in Spain, and beyond.

In the Italian peninsula, where the *pax hispanica* was fragile, where ambassadors complained to Madrid about insidious developments that continually threatened the crown's interests and prestige in Italy, these were skills and attributes of no small importance.<sup>15</sup> Behind the façade of omnipotence, the ambassadors, viceroys, and governors who represented the Spanish monarchy in Italy were constantly looking for allies who could help them to bolster a hegemony that military force alone could not sustain. The New Christians of Naples were one among a range of groups and clienteles on whom the Spanish representatives in Italy relied to provide the necessary resources and knowledge to govern their territories, but their position as members of a minority that was the object of official prejudice and suspicion made them unique. It was an alliance fraught with contradiction and which carried significant risk for both sides, but which lasted for almost two centuries because of the enormous benefits it brought to both.



# 1

## From Jews to New Christians: Religious Minorities in the Making of Spanish Naples

Though Consalvo de Cordoba's spectacular victories over the French at Cerignola and Garigliano in 1503 marked the beginning of the Spanish monarchy's domination of the mainland of Southern Italy, this new territory did not come easily or immediately under the stable control of the crown. The first decades of the sixteenth century witnessed a level of warfare across Italy which destabilized all of the Italian states and left the population, including élites, in a continuous state of uncertainty while the French and Spanish armies attempted to gain the upper hand. For the entire reign of Ferdinand the Catholic, Naples served more as a base of military command and provisioning for continuing warfare in Northern Italy than as a center of government.<sup>1</sup>

The Kingdom of Naples was itself one of the principal causes of Italy's troubles, a populous and wealthy territory to which both the houses of Anjou and Aragon had ancestral claims. 1527, the year in which troops loyal to Charles V sacked the city of Rome and sent Clement VII into flight, was also the year in which the French launched their last and most dangerous assault on the kingdom of Naples. Under the leadership of Odet de Foix, the viscount of Lautrec, a French army aided by a number of rebellious local barons rampaged through the provinces, leaving behind massive civilian casualties and finally arriving at the walls of the city of Naples in the summer of 1528. After cutting off the city's water supply, Lautrec and much of his army succumbed to a sudden outbreak of the plague, and the Spanish viceroy managed to stay in control of the city. The French expedition came close to success, and even more disturbingly for the Spanish, Lautrec was able to find a number of supporters among the barons of the *Regno*, some of whom demonstrated a continued loyalty to the Angevin monarchy, extinct for over sixty years, while others were simply seeking an alternative to Spanish rule.<sup>2</sup>

However, in the years following Lautrec's expedition, the Spanish crown rapidly began to re-establish its authority in the kingdom, exploiting the weakened position of France and the peace established at Cambrai in 1529. The rebels were reduced to obedience through a series of confiscations and reprisals, and a new ruling class, composed of newly arrived Iberian nobility and local barons loyal to the house of Aragon, took their place. By the time Charles made his first visit to the city in 1535 there were few traces of the hostility that had so recently threatened the political stability of the kingdom. Under the guidance of a new viceroy, Pedro de Toledo, a new political consensus had been constructed, one that was all too evident in the lavish celebrations and triumphal arches constructed to welcome the Emperor as he descended from Mount Vesuvius into the city.<sup>3</sup>

The viceroy was an outstanding representative of the Castilian aristocracy, chosen by the Emperor from among his courtiers to bring Neapolitan society and government more resolutely under the control of the central government. His 21-year reign, the longest of any viceroy, marked the definitive passage of southern Italy under Spanish rule, an achievement that earned him a legendary place in the history of the city and of Spain.<sup>4</sup> As viceroy, Toledo oversaw a massive renovation of the infrastructure and defenses of the city of Naples. A new arsenal and shipyard was built to house the Spanish fleet, the city walls were enlarged to encompass almost twice the amount of land as the previous fortifications, roads were repaved and widened, and the city given a new system of sewers and aqueducts. Swamp land in the agricultural plain surrounding the city was reclaimed in order to combat disease and provide more land for agriculture. The viceroy also commissioned new palaces for an expanding court and the tribunals of justice to replace the decaying medieval structures left from the Angevin and Aragonese periods. Over a period of several decades, the revamping of the urban infrastructure transformed the city from the aging capital of a war-torn kingdom into a major regional center of a global empire.<sup>5</sup>

A central feature of the absorption of the city and Kingdom of Naples into the orbit of Spain was an attempt to replicate the policies regarding religious minorities that had been introduced at the end of the fifteenth century in Spain and Sicily. Expelling the kingdom's Jewish population and creating a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition that was capable of enforcing Spanish religious and social norms were two priorities of the Spanish crown in southern Italy, imposed by Ferdinand the Catholic in the immediate aftermath of his conquest. In the eyes of the king and his successors, these two policies were religious and moral imperatives



that were also essential to the foundation of “good government” in the kingdom, no less important than the construction of roads and the collection of taxes.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, in a period full of successes for Spain in the government of Naples, nothing proved more controversial or difficult to accomplish. The inhabitants of the “most faithful” city of Naples and its territory proved unwilling to accept either the expulsion of its Jews nor the installation of a delegate tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition, and resisted the project of bringing the kingdom into conformity with the brand of confessionalized government already established in Spain. In the end, the expulsion was accomplished in 1541 with great difficulty and after a long series of delays, while the idea of establishing the Inquisition was abandoned entirely after a violent revolt in 1547. It would be proposed periodically in the following years by subsequent viceroys, but never actively pursued. There was little support in any sector of the Neapolitan population for the religious politics of the crown; from passive opposition to outright rebellion, reactions to the imposition of these, the most characteristic elements of Spanish government, were almost uniformly hostile.

Furthermore, the expulsion of the Jewish population of the kingdom by no means ended the presence of Judaism in the kingdom. As the Emperor moved against those who openly practiced Judaism in Naples, he favored, even unintentionally, the rise of a different group – the New Christians of the city, mainly immigrants from Iberia, who stood ambiguously between a forced conversion and a full assimilation into Christian society. The events of this period demonstrate a fundamental contradiction of the new regime in Naples. The rapid modernization and centralization that Toledo accomplished depended in large part on precisely those elements that the Spanish sought to eliminate. Both Jews and New Christians performed important functions in the construction of a modern state. Their skill as financiers and bureaucrats, not to mention the raw capital they were capable of bringing from the rural south and from abroad, made them indispensable in a period when the viceroy needed to provide resources not only for domestic expenses, but also for an ever-expanding number of foreign military adventures to which Spain was committed. Much of the history of Spanish Naples in this period is driven by this fundamental contradiction, which pitted the governors of the city and their Iberian masters against the very forces in society which had most to contribute to their success.

The expulsion of the Jews from the Regno di Napoli in 1541 was the culmination of a long process of political negotiation that revealed, in almost every phase, the essential role which Jews played in southern Italian society and the heavy cost of any attempt to remove them. While Spanish authorities used the lines of credit furnished by Jewish lenders to finance the centralization of government in the hands of the viceroy, programs of public works, and foreign military ventures, they also steadfastly moved toward an elimination of the Jewish presence in the Regno in fulfillment of the religious mission of the monarchy as the defender of Catholicism. In a contest where neither side possessed enough strength to prevail immediately, both the Jews and the monarchy parried back and forth for several decades.

The first attempt at expulsion came immediately after conquest. In the chaotic aftermath of the battle of Cerignola, Ferdinand the Catholic had attempted unsuccessfully to order the departure or conversion of the entire Jewish population of the Regno, in order to bring the kingdom in to conformity with his other territories, including the Kingdom of Sicily, where he had issued a similar decree in 1492. He ordered an expulsion in March 1504, only a few months after the conquest had been completed, and again in 1510, but neither was successfully carried out. And after attempting to use the Sicilian Tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition to pursue suspected crypto-Jews in the Regno, the viceroy also attempted to found a tribunal of the Inquisition, a project which was also abandoned in 1511 following protests both by aristocrats and the Neapolitan populace.<sup>7</sup>

The failure of these policies was due in part to the precarious political situation of the kingdom during this period, but the main reason for the difficulties they encountered was that the Kingdom of Naples was a territory with a long history of well integrated and successful Jewish communities. The kingdom's Jews had received particularly good treatment at the hands of the Aragonese kings, Alfonso and Ferrante, and the number and importance of the Jewish communities there had increased even further on the heels of the exodus of a large number of Jews from Iberia and Sicily in the wake of the 1492 expulsion in Spain and the forced baptism in Portugal in 1497. By the time of the Spanish takeover of the kingdom, Jewish lending enterprises could be found across southern Italy, where they performed an essential role in local economies, and several important Sephardic families, headed by the Abravanel clan, had come to settle in the capital. Furthermore, many Jews had acquired the trust and sympathy of native élites in the Regno, who made opposition to expulsion of the Jews a part of their own political program.<sup>8</sup>



Two texts written during this period gave voice to this consensus among local élites. Both were written by humanists, members of the academy founded in Naples by Giovanni Pontano who were nostalgic for the tolerant, cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Aragonese court. Antonio de Ferrariis (1448–1517), known as *il Galateo*, defended both Jews and New Christians in a Latin epistle entitled *De Neofitis*. The letter was written for his patron and fellow humanist, the Duke of Nardò, whose son was preparing to marry a woman from a New Christian family. Through a philosemitic reading of Paul and a reflection on Christian history, de Ferrariis argued that not only were Jews unworthy of the ugly stereotypes that had been placed on them by Christian polemicists, but that they were particularly well suited to Christianity, a religion which had grown out of their own. Speaking as a representative of an “ungrateful Latinity,” de Ferrariis provocatively asked his reader “if we are Christians, if we profess openly in the temple daily to be of the seed of Abraham, if we honor Christ as master and lord, then why do we abominate the Jewish race, the most virtuous and just among all the barbarians?”<sup>9</sup> He implored his reader to love his future daughter-in-law, to instruct her in good manners and Christian doctrine, safe in the knowledge that she came from a noble lineage.

Tristano Caracciolo's pamphlet *De Inquisitione* expressed many of the same concepts. Caracciolo (1437–1522), a friend of de Ferrariis and a fellow member of the *Accademia Pontaniana*, appropriated arguments made against the Spanish Inquisition in previous decades, pointing out that the lust for power and greed that had accompanied the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition made it into an instrument that damaged, rather than served, the causes of orthodoxy and true religion. The irregularities in the conduct of trials and the facility which with they could be corrupted by private interest and subornation of witnesses inevitably “frustrated” the noble goal of the defense of true religion for which the tribunal was created. Caracciolo's text was a pre-emptive strike against the plan of Ferdinand and his successors to install a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in Naples and an attempt to convince the educated to look beyond the religious imperatives of the tribunal and consider its actual political import.<sup>10</sup>

Both of these treatises demonstrated a sympathy for the Jewish communities of the Regno that had its roots in the tolerant atmosphere of the courts of Aragonese kings of Naples and lasted into the mid-sixteenth century in spite of the Spanish takeover of the kingdom. The attitudes expressed by de Ferraris and Caracciolo were carried forward by a surprisingly resourceful group of representatives of the Jewish

community and by nobles who advocated on their behalf. Pressure on the Jews of the Regno diminished considerably during the Italian wars, and by the 1530s the communities of southern Italy had regained much of what they had lost previously.

When he became king in 1516, Charles was convinced of the necessity of expulsion, but discovered like his grandfather that political support for the Jewish community ran deep in the kingdom. In 1533, he issued a formal decree instructing the kingdom's Jews to prepare to leave or convert, but no sooner had it been made public than a barrage of appeals arrived in Spain, imploring that the monarch reconsider his position. Many of these appeals came from Jews, but many did not. There were plenty of Charles' subjects in Italy who recognized, as Caracciolo had before, that Jewish lending was a source of prosperity for the entire Regno that could not be easily eradicated without significant consequences for the economy as a whole. The city council of Naples made a formal appeal to the monarch, and Fernando de Alarcon, the Marquis of Valle Siciliana, a Spanish aristocrat who had arrived in Italy with Consalvo de Cordoba, wrote a brief on behalf of the Jews as well.<sup>11</sup> Charles decided to postpone the expulsion for a year.

A further constraint on the monarch was his government's increasing reliance on Jewish financiers. Though Pedro de Toledo shared the monarch's religious sensibilities, as an administrator he came to depend on the financial skill and resources of Samuel Abravanel, the leading representative of the exiled Portuguese Jews, in his administration of the kingdom. By extending enormous loans to the treasury of the kingdom, Abravanel managed to acquire a privileged position at the court of the viceroy and served as the informal leader and protector of the Jewish community of the city and the Regno. While the decision to rely on Jewish finance was taken by Pedro de Toledo on his own initiative, Charles could scarcely object, given his own lack of resources and dependence on the Regno as a source of revenue for the financing of his military expeditions in the Mediterranean. The military expedition that Charles led to Tunis in 1535 was financed through a loan of twenty thousand ducats that the Abravanel and several associates extended to Pedro de Toledo in return for a renewal of the charter to the Jews of the Regno established in 1520. Pedro sent the terms of the financiers to Charles, who approved them but insisted that the agreement not be immediately announced. Charles agreed to allow the Jews to reside in the kingdom for another ten years, and left open the possibility that the charter might be renewed again.<sup>12</sup>



By 1535, an uneasy truce had settled into place. While Charles himself became ever more preoccupied with the problem of irreligion and heresy, he also had to confront the overextension of his military and lack of resources and arrive at a successful compromise. During his first and only visit to the capital, from November 25, 1535 to March 21, 1536, Charles privately demonstrated an increasing preoccupation with the presence of Jews in his kingdom, while he publicly avoided confronting the issue and even demonstrated a degree of benevolence toward the leaders of the Jewish community.<sup>13</sup>

Shortly after the Emperor's arrival in the city, Juan de Figueroa, a member of the central governing council of the kingdom, the *Consiglio Collaterale*, informed the sovereign of the outcome of his investigation of accusations of crypto-Judaism in the port of Manfredonia. Figueroa revealed to the king that not only were the accusations well-founded, but that the problem was much more profound than he had initially recognized: there were many other "Christians only in name" living in southern Italy who lay outside the reach of any ordinary tribunal, and who continued to commit grave sacrileges. The Emperor took Figueroa's findings seriously, and left a series of instructions on the government of the Regno for the viceroy upon his departure, instructing him to pay special attention to the Jews of the kingdom, who behaved with "too great authority and license" not only in the capital, but in the provinces as well. Not only did Jews converse and interact freely with Christians, but Jewish men dared to engage in sexual relations with Christian women, "committing rape, incest, and adultery against our authority and that of God, and bringing the danger of infecting the entire Christian religion with their blood." As much as heresy, it was the threat of ambiguity and impurity which bothered the sovereign, worried that the "infection" of crypto-Judaism, having been eliminated in Spain, might develop in a new, more virulent form in southern Italy.<sup>14</sup>

Fears of crypto-Judaism and Jewish impurity were largely kept in private, and the Jewish population did not receive much attention in the public debates and conversations on the government of the Regno in which the Emperor took part. The sole exception was a public disputation at the synagogue between the rabbi and Charles' confessor, Antonio de Guevara. During the course of the emperor's visit, Guevara held a series of debates with the rabbi of Naples in the city's synagogue, using arguments that drew heavily on the tradition of medieval Iberian Christian apologetics.<sup>15</sup> Though debates of this kind, beginning with the Barcelona disputation of 1264, were usually held under royal auspices, it is difficult to ascertain whether Charles approved of Guevara's

attack. Certainly, the monarch's tacit permission, if not active consent was necessary.

At the same time, the emperor, still in debt to his Jewish subjects, was capable of treating them with a significant degree of respect. Several contemporary accounts record a meeting between Samuel Abravanel's wife Benvenida and Charles V during the royal visit to Naples. A tradition in Jewish historiography beginning with Samuel Usque's *Consolation of the Tribulations of Israel* (1553) attributes to Benvenida nothing less than having convinced the Emperor to postpone the expulsion decree during a meeting between the two in 1535.<sup>16</sup> Sibilia Falcona, a New Christian brought before the Neapolitan inquisitorial court in 1571, recounted the same story in greater detail to her interrogators. Over 80 years old at the time of her testimony, Falcona mentioned her presence at the meeting with the Emperor some 40 years prior, and related to the court how she had witnessed the emperor in conversation with a "*gran ricca Judea*" who requested that he renew the charter allowing Jews to live in the kingdom. Without her father's assistance, the lady argued, the Kingdom of Naples would have been lost. When the emperor told her that she should become a Christian, she replied that she was of a greater lineage than he: while he descended from the Maccabees, she was a descendant of King David. The Emperor responded that the Maccabees were "men of war," and ended the conversation.<sup>17</sup>

More importantly, the Abravanel and the rest of the Jewish community in Naples obtained what they wanted. While his visit to the Kingdom of Naples impressed on Charles the necessity of establishing the same standards of religious purity in all of his kingdoms and convinced him that expulsion was the only valid solution for the Kingdom of Naples, he left the city still in debt to its Jewish bankers, a situation he shared with many of his most illustrious subjects. The visit itself had forced the city's nobility to turn to the Abravanel and others for the necessary capital to mount the elaborate spectacles and banquets that entertained the monarch and his entourage for four months. In the view of one of the principal chroniclers of the period, the Jews of Naples became wealthier every day the emperor remained in the city.<sup>18</sup>

The emperor did not make another attempt to move forward with the expulsion until 1539. Cardinal Pedro Pacheco, sent from Madrid to inspect the administration of the Kingdom of Naples, re-asserted the necessity of an expulsion in order to avoid the "dangerous and immoral" results of coexistence between Jews and Christians. At the very least, Pacheco suggested that the Jews be gathered into a single quarter of every city in which they lived, and be forced to wear distinguishing

signs. This identification and separation would permit the bare minimum of administrative organization necessary for the government to control the Jewish population, and would prevent the kind of intermixing that was so distasteful to Spanish sensibilities. These were both regulations that had a long pedigree in medieval Aragon and Castile, where Jews had lived separately from Christians in *juderías*, especially after the destructive riots of 1391, and were required by various legal codes, including Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas*, to wear distinguishing signs.

Charles accepted Pacheco's suggestions and sent a decree to Naples on November 10 that contained these very provisions. But even before the viceroy could take action, the leaders of the Jewish community became aware of the decree and began to agitate against it. They insisted that it violated the terms of the agreement made four years prior, and they declared that they would sooner call their loans and leave the kingdom than see their privileges eliminated. The Jews took confidence in the continuing financial difficulties of the emperor, and hoped that their threats would prove strong enough to convince him to reverse the decision. This proved to be a gross miscalculation, as the monarch responded that he would return all of the loans and ordered the expulsion for the second time in September of 1540.<sup>19</sup>

Once again, a Spanish ultimatum was met with protest from influential sectors of the aristocracy. In November 1540 a general parliament of the kingdom was held in Naples, in which the representatives of the city of Naples prepared a brief which they sent to Spain in which they insisted on the economic benefits that Jewish lending provided to the regional economy. They also pointed out that the emperor had made an agreement to the Jews which guaranteed them ten years' stay in the kingdom and that only half that time had passed since the date of the agreement. But the issue was not considered significant enough to extend the dispute, and after this protest, the representatives of the city approved another large donation to the royal treasury.<sup>20</sup>

While the kingdom's elites continued a legal battle against the decree of the sovereign, other subjects began to prepare for an expulsion which many had come to regard as inevitable. In 1539, on the heels of Pacheco's visit, two Neapolitan citizens founded a *Monte di Pietà*, a religious institution for small-scale, low-interest loans, on the model of the hundreds of other *monti* that had been founded, largely by Franciscans, throughout northern and central Italy in the fifteenth century. The Franciscans founded the *monti* in an explicit competition with Jewish lenders, who they derided as usurers, and viewed them as a pragmatic way to remove the economic base of Jewish survival in Christian



societies. The Neapolitan bank was no exception, and was presented in a seventeenth-century text as a way of ensuring that the “Jewish practice” of usury did not take root among Christians after the Jews had left the kingdom. The Monte also had the more practical goal of providing loans to recuperate property held as collateral by Jewish lenders. Within several decades, the Monte would grow to become one of the largest lending enterprises in Italy.<sup>21</sup> The state treasury also moved to meet its obligations to Jewish lenders during the same period, while the political process remained static.

By May of 1541, the necessary preparations for the expulsion had been made, and the emperor gave a final deadline of four months from May 22 for the Jews to leave the kingdom. Five years of debate and negotiation ended in the expulsion of the Jews of the Kingdom of Naples and truncated the millennial presence of Jews in southern Italy, a community that had provided a crucial link in the network of Jewish merchants across the Mediterranean, and had been responsible for important cultural developments, such as the first Hebrew printing press. Only the Abravanel, who could not be immediately repaid, were granted an exemption, and the family waited until 1543 to finally leave the city.<sup>22</sup>

There is very little information available regarding the aftermath of the expulsion decree and the fate of the Jews of the Kingdom of Naples. There were many who had recently come from Iberia, and were capable of embarking again on a new journey toward other realms, as many Sephardic Jews would do throughout the early modern period. The Abravanel, despite having a privilege that allowed them to stay in the kingdom beyond the expiration of the safe-conduct, eventually left for the tolerant Este state in Ferrara. Others emigrated further, to northern Europe and the Ottoman Empire. They left behind a kingdom that was certainly poorer, and without an adequate replacement for the system of lending that the Jewish community had provided in previous decades and centuries.

The number of those who decided to stay in the kingdom and convert to Christianity seems to have been relatively low. There are no traces in archival documents or chronicles of large-scale conversions, and none of the riots and episodes of violence against Jews that accompanied forced conversions and expulsions in Spain and Portugal. As late as February of 1541, Pedro de Toledo wrote to the emperor to say that he knew of no cases of Jews who had converted since the announcement of the expulsion, nor could he guarantee that any conversions in the future would be motivated by a genuine attraction to Christ, rather than by

a cold calculation of personal interest. "This knowledge," he wrote, "is entirely reserved to our Lord, who knows the hearts of men."<sup>23</sup> Once again, Sibilia Falcona's testimony provides some suggestive evidence. She told inquisitors in 1571 that she had persuaded a young Jewish boy whose parents had remained in Naples to collect unpaid debts to convert to Christianity, telling him that the Jews were a hated people "without king and without country." The boy eventually agreed to be baptized as Giovan Giacomo Damasotta (from Jacob de Masotto), and convinced his sister to follow his example.<sup>24</sup> While individual conversions like this probably took place all over the kingdom, it was not a mass phenomenon, and domestic converts from Judaism did not represent a significant social group at any point after the expulsion.

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During the entire period when the representatives of the Spanish monarchy and the viceroy were consumed with eliminating the presence of Jews in the Regno, they permitted and even favored a parallel phenomenon: the ascent of conversos within the administration of the kingdom and within Neapolitan society. The decades surrounding the expulsion are precisely those in which New Christians begin to appear more frequently in the public affairs of the kingdom, moving to the top of bureaucratic hierarchies, acquiring wealth and titles, and consolidating political influence. As the Spanish monarchy worked to erode the power of the landed aristocracy, it opened up spaces of opportunity for educated and ambitious urban dwellers to serve in the administration of the kingdom.<sup>25</sup> Spanish New Christians, who were familiar with Spanish practices of government and who maintained networks of relatives and business partners in Spain and Italy, were ideally positioned to take advantage of this shift, and New Christians, both individually and in family groups, began to acquire position and influence, during the very years when the presence of the Jewish communities of the kingdom was beginning to come into question.

Over the previous century, New Christians had become especially adept at acquiring positions of influence in local and central government in the kingdoms of Iberia. Conversos constituted a concrete social group; one which proved over more than a century to possess the necessary means and cohesion to arrive at positions of power and wealth in spite of the stigma of their Jewish ancestry. Conversion, whether forced or willing, freed these dynamic and sophisticated families from the legal restrictions pertaining to Jews and opened up new paths toward

positions of influence, especially in royal and municipal administration. Confronting this disruptive social ascent was one of the motivations behind both the introduction of the first blood purity statute, excluding conversos from the city council of Toledo in 1449, and the inauguration of the Spanish Inquisition in 1487.<sup>26</sup>

In the Regno di Napoli, the situation was somewhat different. Aside from a brief period of forced conversions and persecutions at the end of the fifteenth century, the Jewish communities of the Regno had suffered relatively little during the decades leading up to the expulsion. There was very little popular anti-Judaism to accompany the onslaught of royal edicts and offensives against the Jewish and New Christian communities. On the contrary, New Christian immigrants from Spain found in the Regno an accessible place of refuge with long-standing economic, political, and cultural ties to the Kingdom of Aragon. It was a place relatively free of the stifling prejudice and perennial religious conflict of Iberia, but just as importantly, a territory under the jurisdiction of the King of Spain where their credentials were valid and the possibility of a career, property, and perhaps even a title, was just as likely, if not more so, than in Spain itself. Even after the expulsion of 1541, the two institutions most responsible for the difficulties of the New Christians in Spain, the Inquisition and the blood purity statutes, were not immediately introduced in Naples. The anti-Jewish sentiment widely shared among Old Christians in Spain, especially among the urban classes, was scarcely present in southern Italy.

Between the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, Aragonese conversos began to arrive in Naples from the major political and economic centers of Ferdinand II's territory – Zaragoza, Barcelona, Valencia, and Perpignan – and specialized in mercantile activity and in the provision of loans to the royal treasury. The first signs of a convergence between the interests of the conversos and the Spanish viceroys come in 1529, the year following Lautrec's desperate and nearly successful attempt to reclaim the kingdom for France. The viceroy Philibert of Châlon, the Prince of Orange, took advantage of the defeat of the rebels to grant the property and offices confiscated from the rebels to those who had remained faithful to the Spanish regime, and in a list compiled at the time of property, incomes, and offices confiscated from the rebels who had joined the French cause and their new owners we can begin to see the emergence of the conversos as they began to occupy a new center of power in the city and kingdom. While the most desirable spoils went to local aristocrats or members of the Castilian military elite living in the kingdom, there was plenty left for



men of lesser breeding, like the Catalan merchant and New Christian Rafael Raguant, who received the office, worth 300 ducats a year in salary, of *credenziere* of the *dogana delle pecore* in Foggia, the authority that governed and taxed the migration of sheep from Abruzzo to Apulia. He was not alone: Galzerano Villagut, the brother of an important New Christian merchant, was granted the office of *razionale* of the *Sommaria*, the administrative court that governed the state treasury, and Baltasar Galzerano, who ran a lending operation in Naples, was granted control of the customs house in Barletta, among the most important ports in the kingdom.<sup>27</sup>

In the years that followed, this new group of office-holders and financiers found its point of reference in Alfonso Sanchez (d. 1564), the treasurer general of the kingdom and the head of the most powerful converso dynasty in southern Italy. Sanchez came from a family of conversos that had long been tied to the house of Trastámara and had abandoned Aragon in 1485 after they had been implicated in the murder of the inquisitor Pedro de Arbués. The clan re-established itself both in Sicily and in Naples, and after participating in the conquest in 1503, Alfonso's uncle Francisco was named treasurer-general. Alfonso distinguished himself in diplomatic service as a young man, and in 1525 Charles V nominated him to succeed his uncle. In 1546, Sanchez was rewarded with the extraordinary privilege to pass on his office to his son, also named Alfonso (d. 1607), while he moved on to a position on the *Consiglio Collaterale*, the chief governing council of the Regno, composed of the viceroy and six advisors.<sup>28</sup>

Alfonso Sanchez sr. used his position in government to accumulate a considerable private fortune, valued at 200,000 ducats by one observer. In addition to the treasurer's 1,000 ducats in annual salary, he received *mercedes*, or royal grants, worth roughly 2,844 ducats yearly, and his nearly unsupervised control over the financial administration of the kingdom permitted him numerous opportunities to use his knowledge of and control over the state's purse strings to his own benefit, through both licit and illicit means.<sup>29</sup> He possessed a privileged understanding of the workings of state finance and the structure of public debt, which permitted him to engage in speculation on returns on securities and sales of public property. An exceptionally shrewd bureaucrat named Bartolomeo Camerario recognized the irresponsible and aggressive speculation that Alfonso Sanchez had engaged in at the expense of the royal treasury. He wrote a long denunciation of Sanchez and a consortium of other bureaucrats to Charles V in 1536, explaining that not even the spendthrift Aragonese monarchs had suffered such

corruption and mismanagement. Of the 600,000 ducats granted to the royal treasury by the Neapolitan parliament the previous year, he alleged that over 200,000 had ended up in the pockets of Sanchez and his allies, who, by using false names to issue loans to the treasury and charging exorbitant interest, had turned their offices into a source of personal wealth. The emperor responded by naming Camerario lieutenant of the Sommaria, the treasury court, and granting him the authority to investigate and try cases of fraud and abuse of office. Though Camerario diligently performed the task assigned him, he was eventually undermined by the Sanchez, who managed to have him tried and convicted for extortion by the Sommaria. Stripped of his office, Camerario fled to Rome; the royal treasury, still under Sanchez's control, returned to business as usual.<sup>30</sup>

Only in 1563, when a more powerful commissioner, Gaspar de Quiroga, arrived from Spain did the Sanchez face a genuine investigation of their activities, and both were found guilty of a number of abuses of their office. Alfonso sr. had improperly used public money for speculation, embezzled funds from the state treasury, and falsified official documentation. Alfonso jr. was found guilty of using a false front to purchase quantities of public debt and fraud. Abuses of this kind were rampant in the state administration of the kingdom, though very few individuals managed to commit them on such a large scale. Nevertheless, despite their implication in these crimes, the Sanchez were able to maintain their position in government, at least in part due to their close association with Pedro de Toledo, and their importance to the functioning of the state financial administration. Both were given large fines, and temporarily relieved of some of their duties, but spared galley service and other heavy penalties.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the middle decades of the sixteenth century, the Sanchez enriched themselves and their clients and reaped the benefits of an improved social status, becoming members of the noble *seggi* of the Regno.<sup>32</sup> This was achieved entirely through the acquisition of land and titles, as well as the acquisition of clients and political clout. Alfonso sr. bought the houses that had belonged to the family of Consalvo de Cordoba across from the church of San Giovanni Maggiore, and began the construction of a massive new palace on the design of Giovanni da Nola in 1549. He also purchased land and rents, including the fief of Grottola in Basilicata, a patrimony that provided his family with solid territorial base in the Regno. Alfonso jr. married doña Caterina de Luna, a member of the Aragonese nobility, an advantageous union which further elevated the family's status and probably contributed to

the conferral of the title of *marchese* on Alfonso in 1574. In a moment when most of the Neapolitan nobility was living through a period of economic difficulty and political decline, the *arriviste* Sanchez family became extraordinarily wealthy, and made continual progress toward affirmation among the high nobility of the kingdom. The family made frequent demonstrations of its wealth and generosity in an effort to embody the *liberalità* which was central to the ethic of the Neapolitan ruling class. Alfonso Sanchez sr. held a memorable banquet for Charles V in his home in 1535, and during the celebrations of Philip II's swearing in as king of Naples in 1554, Alfonso jr. passed through the streets on horseback, with two enormous bags of gold coins, distributing them freely to whoever approached him.<sup>33</sup>

Other New Christians found similar opportunities for wealth and social advancement in service to the viceroy. Perotto Villagut, a Catalan merchant "who owned a splendid house just like any titled baron of this kingdom" came to the city from Perpignan in the 1520s with enough wealth that "the viceroys of the kingdom took notice and called on him frequently for the needs of the court." In 1545, Pedro de Toledo wrote to his son in law Cosimo de' Medici to recommend the merchant, and to ask the Duke of Florence to allow Villagut to unload a cargo of iron arriving from Spain in the port of Livorno. The viceroy explained that Villagut was both a merchant and a royal official responsible for collecting duties on imports of iron, which made all of his business "convenient to the service of his majesty."<sup>34</sup> Villagut's wealth also allowed him to acquire an advanced social position in the city, and he married all three of his daughters to minor noblemen. Geronima Villagut married a member of one of the kingdom's leading aristocratic families, Diomede Carafa, and another daughter, Francina, married a member of the de Cardines family with a small property in Isernia. By the following generation, Geronima Villagut's ancestry was all but forgotten: in 1559, her son Francesco Carafa requested membership in the Castilian military order of Santiago after a series of witnesses testified that his lineage was "free from any race of moor, Jew, or converso." Though other members of the Villagut family were later implicated as judaizers, this branch was able to successfully disguise its past and assimilate into the highest social strata of the city.<sup>35</sup>

Girolamo Pellegrino, a descendant of Valencian Jews who would eventually die at the stake during the inquisitorial campaign that began in 1569, occupied several posts in the administration of the kingdom, including that of commissioner for the Terra di Lavoro and Molise,



as well as a post in the treasury responsible for paying companies of Spanish troops stationed throughout the kingdom. In collusion with Alfonso Sanchez jr., Pellegrino embezzled large sums of money by placing the names of deceased and fictitious soldiers on the payroll. He was tried for this violation in 1563 and punished with a heavy fine, but not deprived of his office.<sup>36</sup> Instead the family entered into the service of the highest nobility in the kingdom; Girolamo became a client of the D'Avalos family, the powerful lords of Vasto and Pescara, while his nieces Laudomia and Isabella entered into the service of the Princess of Bisignano, the wife of Pietro Antonio Sanseverino, one of the leaders of the noble faction most closely allied with the viceroy. His property at the time of his death included contracts for the collection of taxes on steel, iron, and fish worth over 15,000 ducats.<sup>37</sup>

According to Pellegrino's confession to inquisitors in 1569, his initiation into crypto-Judaism occurred as a direct result of his work in the treasury. He recalled a fateful mission in 1542 in the company of another *pagatore* (payment official), Galzerano Alugia, to pay the Spanish infantry garrisoned in Apulia. As the party approached Cerignola, Pellegrino suggested to his companion that they stop for a drink. Alugia replied that he would not drink or eat that day, because he and the entire *nazione catalana* fasted on that particular day in September. Without revealing the Jewish origin of the observance, Alugia persuaded Pellegrino to follow his example by telling him that God would remit his sins and grant him well being and honor. As he explained in his confession, for Pellegrino this conversation was the beginning of a religious transformation that led him closer to Judaism, though he insisted that he followed these practices without thinking that he was doing anything contrary to the teaching of the church.<sup>38</sup>

The foundation of the authority of the Sanchez lay in the family's ability to control the treasury and install their clients and relatives in its offices as *percettori* (tax collectors), and *pagatori*. In addition to Girolamo Pellegrino, a number of other New Christians, including his relative Luigi Pellegrino, Alfonso Alugia, Luigi Cruilles, and members of the Busale, Basalu, del Castiglio, Vaglies, and Vignes families held offices in the treasury between 1530 and 1550. All of these families were considered members of the *nazione catalana*, the Aragonese community in Naples, and most of them were implicated in the inquisitorial trials of the 1570s. Some of them were also implicated in speculative maneuvers involving the use of public funds. Michele Villagut, a tax collector, was found guilty of fraud and embezzlement; he had invested tax revenue due to the state on grain speculation in collaboration

with Alfonso Sanchez; when the returns did not arrive, he sent a cart filled with stones and tree branches back to Naples and fled across the border.<sup>39</sup>

Though individually wealthy, New Christians participated only minimally in loans to the state compared to the involvement of the Abravanel and the Jewish community that had preceded them. Two important converso-run banks, the first controlled by the Vitale and Galzerano and the second by the Busale and Vaglies, began lending in the late 1530s, competing for place in a financial sphere largely dominated by Genoese families.<sup>40</sup> But systematic data on the acquisition of public debt shows that New Christian loans accounted for only 0.7 percent of the total capital invested in public debt during the period from 1556 to 1583, while the Genoese mercantile and banking families contributed 27.95 percent. The Sanchez, unsurprisingly, regularly invested large sums, as much as 5,000 ducats, while other converso families, such as the Vignes, Villagut, Moles, Paglies, Blanes, and Leone also lent sums that varied between 100 and 2300 ducats.<sup>41</sup>

At least during this period, the bond between the conversos and the Neapolitan state was located not in the loans provided by the former to the latter, but rather in the technical and bureaucratic function that the New Christians exercised on behalf of the crown. By the 1550s, the New Christians had carved out a considerable sphere of authority in the kingdom: in an area that was regarded as one in which Spanish authorities were most sensitive – the fiscal administration of the kingdom. The Sanchez enjoyed a privileged rapport with Pedro de Toledo and his successors which rendered them immune to any scrutiny. Every time a high-ranking representative of the crown was sent from Madrid to inspect the administration of the kingdom, they found plenty of evidence which implicated the Sanchez and their collaborators in gross abuses, but merely inflicted fines and temporary punishments that caused little, if any, interference in their activity in government.

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The absence of instruments of religious repression and ethnic distinction made Naples not only an ideal social environment for conversos, but an ideal religious environment as well, a place that permitted the kinds of experimentation and individual expression that attracted attention throughout Italy and beyond. In a moment of profound religious crisis and doctrinal debate, the Neapolitan conversos engaged the issues of justification, papal authority, and biblical interpretation with passion

and conviction, often arriving on opposite sides of profound religious divisions.

The most famous converso in Naples during this period was Juan de Valdés (1509–1541), a charismatic religious leader and humanist who left Spain with his brother Alfonso after his family had been placed under investigation by the Holy Office in their native Cuenca. He arrived in the city in 1535 and attracted a wide circle of followers among the high aristocracy and the clergy of Naples for his powerful critiques of traditional theology and religious practice, critiques that he laid down in a series of writings that became important vehicles for a message of religious change throughout Italy. Valdés came to influence an entire generation of reformers and religious dissenters, many at the highest ranks of the Roman curia and in the palaces of the Italian nobility. He possessed a particular appeal for women, and his circle in Naples included a number of noblewomen, most notably Vittoria Colonna, the Marchesa di Pescara, and Giulia Gonzaga, but also a number of local women of wealth and rank, including Alfonso Sanchez's wife Brianda Ruiz, implicated after her death in several inquisitorial investigations.<sup>42</sup>

Valdés' teaching, heavily influenced by Erasmus' criticism of the bible and his calls for Christian unity, contained positions on works and faith that were close to those of Luther, but he ultimately chose an ambiguous and conciliatory attitude towards the ceremonies of the Roman Church and the authority of the papacy that prevented direct confrontation and avoided drastic action. But his penetrating analyses and persuasive rhetoric could also appeal to a more radical sensibility. Some of his followers took his message to its logical extremes, becoming Anabaptists and Antitrinitarians, and there is evidence that Valdesian ideas provided a fertile context for the elaboration of crypto-Jewish beliefs and practices. The same humanist textual criticism of the bible that had led Valdés to reinterpret fundamental aspects of Christian theology was taken by some of his followers in entirely different directions. Girolamo Busale, a Calabrian of Spanish, probably converso, origin, came into contact with Valdés' followers during the 1540s and moved toward ever-more radical theological positions, including denial of dogmas such as the immortality of the soul and the Trinity. After Valdés died in 1541, Busale returned to Naples and led some of his followers toward an entirely Judaic interpretation of scripture. He questioned the divinity of Christ and his status as the messiah, positions which he supported through a profound knowledge of the Bible and a mastery of textual criticism.<sup>43</sup>



Fearing persecution, Busale left the city for northern Italy, where he made a temporary alliance with Anabaptists, only to return in 1551, fully aware of the increasingly dangerous situation that he had created. He began to proselytize for Judaism in public, while his family, aware of how precarious his position had become, encouraged him to flee Italy and head east toward the Ottoman Empire. In 1551, he left Naples for Egypt, where some of his relatives were living. Though relatively few of Valdés' followers were attracted to the judaizing that Busale proposed, he was able to attract a small group of allies. Two Neapolitans with no converso background, Lorenzo Tizzano and Giovanni Laureto di Bongiorno – both members of the clergy, followed him toward a Jewish interpretation of the bible, although both eventually recanted their radical theological positions and returned to the Catholic Church after trials by the Holy Office in Venice. Laureto eventually left Italy for Salonica, the destination of many conversos seeking a return to Judaism, where he was circumcised and welcomed into the Jewish community.<sup>44</sup>

New Christians were also present in movements that represented a more traditionalist strain of religious values, such as the converso women who founded a conservatory for orphaned girls in 1535 in a building that had once housed a synagogue and was re-consecrated as the church of Santa Caterina Spina Corona. The conservatory was patronized by the viceroy, who provided the women with an initial donation and persuaded others to do the same. Part of a broad trend toward the foundation and reform of institutes of religious assistance in the city in the early sixteenth century, the conservatory became the main institute for the assistance of orphaned women, and was imitated in other Italian cities.<sup>45</sup>

Even more importantly, a member of the converso nazione was behind the foundation of one of the most representative institutions of Catholic reform in the city, the Jesuit house. Girolamo Vignes, scion of a family of affluent merchants from Valencia, left Naples for Padua in the 1540s to study at the university, where he witnessed the activity of both local evangelicals and the nascent Society of Jesus. Impressed by the Jesuits' aggressive campaigns against heresy and their assistance to the local population, he decided to work towards the foundation of a Jesuit professed house in Naples. Making use of his contacts within the Neapolitan government and society, and with the special assistance of Ettore Pignatelli, the Duke of Monteleone, Vignes managed to convince both Pedro de Toledo and Ignatius of Loyola of the value of his project. In 1551, the first Jesuits arrived in the city and immediately began to attack Valdés and his followers through sermons and denunciations to

the Holy Office. Though Vignes never joined the order, he persuaded his younger brothers to join, and managed the finances of the order in southern Italy, soliciting donations from wealthy families for the construction of new churches and schools.<sup>46</sup>

The range of contradictory religious attitudes demonstrated by a group which demonstrated such cohesion in familial and economic affairs can be partially explained by the historical experience of the *nazione catalana*. After experiencing at first hand the worst violence of the Spanish Inquisition and the polemics over pure blood, they arrived in Naples at the beginning of a battle over questions of orthodoxy, justification, and obedience which would transform the Catholic Church. The ideas of Luther and Valdés were subjects still open to debate in the first half of the sixteenth century, and some of the most articulate advocates of their ideas and their opponents were in Naples during this period – not only Valdés and Ochino, but Gian Pietro Carafa and Gaetano da Thiene, the founders of the Theatine order, who chose Naples as one of their first battlegrounds to combat the advance of evangelicalism in Italy. In this environment there was no natural position for conversos, whose own identity was fraught with tension and ambiguity, and who had perhaps more to lose for taking strong positions in religious matters than others. Not by chance, converso religious authors in Spain had developed over the course of the fourteenth century a tradition of spiritual writing which promoted the interiorization of faith as a central value and as a weapon against the Inquisition's attempts to classify and punish exterior behavior, and it was Valdés himself who helped to introduce this discourse to evangelical circles, earning the contempt of Calvinist theologians who considered him a Nicodemite who hid his true beliefs in order to conform to the world. Ambiguity in appearance and willingness to change one's attitudes to suit the times may have come more naturally to the New Christians than to other Neapolitans.<sup>47</sup>

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While Valdés escaped the attention of ecclesiastical authorities through an early death, the extraordinary success of his movement was one of the factors behind the creation of a system of religious surveillance and prosecution in Italy along the lines of the ones that already existed in Spain and Portugal. At the behest of the most reactionary cardinals in the curia, in particular the Neapolitan Gian Pietro Carafa, in 1542 Paul III issued the bull *Licet ab initio*, which instituted a new tribunal of the Inquisition, based in Rome but with jurisdiction over all of Italy, to

prosecute heresy. While the cardinals struggled to build a network of stable tribunals that could sustain a campaign of religious prosecution over the long term, without interruption, and with minimal support from secular authorities, they aggressively moved to reduce the ability of evangelicals and other religious dissenters to disseminate and promote their ideas.

Nearly all of the Italian cities made efforts to limit the powers of the new inquisitorial tribunals, and Naples was no exception. While Pedro de Toledo was in sympathy with the goals of the Roman Inquisition, and had made efforts to stop the spread of heretical teaching through the use of the state criminal court, he resisted the creation of a local tribunal of an Inquisition dependent on Rome. In 1547, the viceroy announced the creation of a new tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in Naples, which would take over the jurisdiction of the local episcopal tribunal in questions of heresy as well as the representatives of the newly founded Roman Inquisition in Naples. The policy was announced as a remedy against the increasing presence of evangelical ideas in the city, a bad seed that had been planted through the teaching of Valdés, and above all through the preaching of his disciple Bernardino Ochino (1487–1564), who fled across the Alps after enthraling the Neapolitan public with his sermons on works and justification.<sup>48</sup>

Just as on previous occasions, the announcement of a branch of the Spanish Inquisition in Naples provoked a unified rejection by local elites and the Neapolitan populace who regarded it as another intrusion of the Spanish monarchy that violated the privileges and autonomy of the city of Naples, a further step towards absolute monarchy, and the city revolted in May 1547. After thirteen days of violence during which hundreds of Neapolitan citizens and a handful of Spanish soldiers were killed, both the viceroy and the noble *seggi* of the city sent representatives to the emperor in Nuremberg, who agreed to pardon the city for its disobedience and abandon the project of installing a tribunal of the Inquisition *a modo di Spagna*, but refused the demands of the most radical members of the city's delegation that he replace Pedro de Toledo with a new viceroy. The "most faithful" city was required to pay reparation of 100,000 ducats, and 36 citizens considered responsible for the most violent and rebellious actions during the revolt were excluded from the pardon. Most fled the city; as with previous rebels, their property was confiscated.<sup>49</sup>

The rebellion of 1547 made it clear that only a local ecclesiastical tribunal under the control of Neapolitan authorities could have any hope of acquiring the consensus among the local population necessary for it



to function. The contradiction of a city which was willing to accept a tribunal subject to the control of the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office while fiercely opposed to the Spanish Inquisition is only superficial. The Roman Inquisition, like all ecclesiastical tribunals, was subject in the Kingdom of Naples to a medieval statute which required the *regio exequatur*, an approval from the king (or in his stead, the viceroy) before any change in ecclesiastical jurisdiction could become valid inside the kingdom. This granted an effective power of veto to the viceroy and made him the guarantor of the restrictions on inquisitorial activity. The most important of these was a limitation of the Holy Office's power to confiscate the property of heretics and their families. The nobility, suspicious after decades of centralization of authority and abolition of privilege, viewed the power to confiscate and redistribute wealth as one that would have inevitably been misused by Spanish kings to take revenge on barons who resisted their policies. For this reason, while members of all social groups participated in the revolt, it was led by men like the Prince of Salerno Ferrante Sanseverino, conservative aristocrats who had no objection to the aims of the Inquisition but wanted to ensure that it would be forced to operate under constitutional limits and its decisions subject to appeal.<sup>50</sup>

In the absence of a functioning episcopal court, and with the Roman Inquisition not yet fully operational five years after its foundation, this effectively meant that religious dissidents could continue to operate in the city if they were willing to keep a low profile and avoid direct conflict with the Church. The project of a strong, permanent court of the Inquisition was years away. While the Spanish monarchy never entirely abandoned the project of installing its own inquisitorial court in the city and in the kingdom, the papacy was forced to build its own inquisitorial system quietly, without disturbing the peace or giving the impression that the Holy Office was an "innovation" that would damage the liberty of the kingdom and its citizens. In 1550, the Congregation of the Holy Office began to extradite suspects to Rome with a frigate that routinely passed between Naples and Civitavecchia, and under the guidance of the archbishop Gian Pietro Carafa, his vicar Scipione Rebiba, and the local Jesuits, a rudimentary campaign against heresy, heavily reliant on the assistance of the state, began to take shape in the city.<sup>51</sup>

Though the conversos had been the reason behind the first attempts to install a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in the Kingdom of Naples, they were strangely absent from the debates in the 1540s, overshadowed by the greater problem of evangelicals. The shift in attention and the successful revolt in 1547 meant that the New Christian community in

the city could continue to benefit from a situation that had few parallels in territories under control of the Spanish crown and live without fear of either prosecution for crypto-Judaism or persecution for their status as recent converts. Anti-converso rhetoric was entirely absent from the viceroy's plans for the tribunal, and the city's conversos seem to have remained outside the fray, choosing not to take sides in the dispute over the Holy Office. Nevertheless, they could not have regarded the failure of the project as anything but a victory that preserved the necessary political and social conditions for the survival of the New Christian community in Naples and demonstrated once again that Neapolitan society was not a mirror image of that of its Spanish overlords.

# 2

## Conversos in Counter-Reformation Italy

The New Christians who arrived in Naples at the beginning of the sixteenth century believed that they had come to a place very different from Spain and Portugal. Italy lacked the tribunals of the Inquisition which had persecuted them in Spain and sent them looking for safe refuge. However, by the 1540s, the situation took a dramatic turn. Under Paul III, the papacy began the slow process of rebuilding after the devastation of the sack of Rome and of developing a response to the Protestant Reformation. Rather than seeking common ground with evangelicals or innovating in ways that would respond positively to the protests against the church, the papacy took a turn towards a more austere ethic, one that emphasized the most traditionalist and authoritarian strains in the Church's past. The biblical division of the wheat from the chaff (Matthew 3: 12) became the guiding metaphor for the church as the Roman curia searched for more precise definitions of its guiding doctrines and marginalized those, including cardinals, who sought compromise with heresy and irreligion. The Roman Inquisition (1542), the Society of Jesus (1540), and the first Index of Prohibited Books (1549) were all founded in a relatively brief span of time, as instruments which at least in part served the goal of opposing the spread of evangelical teaching in Italy and reinforcing the authority and image of the clergy.

In this new environment, Jews and New Christians were not the central concern of the Church. But such a vast and all-encompassing shift had consequences in places beyond the immediate targets of the papacy's ire. The latter half of the sixteenth century saw dramatic change in the attitude of the Roman curia towards Jews and New Christians. Whereas in the past the presence of Jewish communities had been tolerated and their conversion desired but not insisted upon, with the advent of the ferociously intolerant pontiff Paul IV, a new era



in Papal-Jewish relations began, one that stood in stark contrast to the preceding centuries. No longer was the conversion of the Jews conceived of in terms of sacred history and millenarian expectations; instead, the papacy took a much more aggressive and activist approach to the problem of the presence of Jews in the midst of a Christian society. Jews were to be made aware of their subordination to Christians and forced to live in humiliating and servile conditions that would force them to recognize their errors and hasten their conversion. The task was no longer something to be left to providence: it became the duty of the Church to actively bring it about.<sup>1</sup>

Two developments inaugurated this new policy: the creation of the Roman *Casa dei Catecumeni* by Paul III in 1543 and the publication of the bull *Cum Nimis Absurdum* by Paul IV in 1555, which mandated the enclosure of Jews in ghettos in the entire papal state, including Rome, and required Jews to wear distinguishing signs. The oppressive conditions in the ghettos imposed by Paul IV and his successors were designed to humiliate and drive their inhabitants into conversion to Christianity. The Jews, stated the bull, must "recognize themselves as servants, and Christians as having been truly freed by Jesus Christ. (*recognoscant se servos, christianos vero liberos per Iesum Christum . . . effectos fuisse*)"<sup>2</sup>

The creation of the ghetto represented a profound rupture with the past. Relations between Jews and Christians in Rome had been regulated in the previous centuries, but they had been accepted. Now, the Jews were to be gathered into the largest of their settlements in the city, in the Rione Sant'Angelo, and enclosed behind a wall. The ghetto was a form of discipline designed to guide the Jews toward conversion, while also preventing the kinds of exchange that were regarded as potentially dangerous for the Catholic majority. The Roman ghetto was bordered by a high wall with two gates that were constantly guarded. The movements of Jews in and out of the walls were strictly regulated, while most Christians were prevented from entering the ghetto entirely. This regime of surveillance was also accompanied by a constant barrage of religious propaganda. Jews were forced to listen to polemical sermons by friars and converts, and they were surrounded by imagery and rituals that symbolized their enslavement and exalted Roman Catholicism.<sup>3</sup>

Though the *Casa dei Catecumeni* preceded the creation of the Roman ghetto by several years, the two were closely linked conceptually and practically: the ghetto made the lives of Jews miserable, and the *casa* presented one of the very few means of escape, an escape that could be obtained at the price of abandonment of Judaism and acceptance of baptism. The purpose of the *casa* was to facilitate the separation of Jews

(and to a lesser extent, Muslims) from their families and co-religionists in order to guide them toward conversion to Catholicism and eventual baptism. Inside, neophytes underwent an intense program of catechesis and religious education with a clear and persistent message: that the old law of Judaism had been replaced by the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, the only true path to salvation. Indoctrination was combined with material assistance: the neophytes received room and board in the casa for the period prior to baptism, and were provided with a small stipend after they left. In one of the many bitter ironies surrounding the institution, much of the money that supported the casa came from the Jewish community itself, which was required to make an annual contribution.<sup>4</sup>

While Rome represented the location in which these institutions were developed and refined, the “laboratory” of the Counter-Reformation in which policies were tested, they found favor elsewhere as well.<sup>5</sup> They were considered successful initiatives that became trademarks of Catholic social policy in Italy. The norms laid out by the papacy were legally binding only within the papal state, where the Pope had both spiritual and temporal jurisdiction, but they proved sufficiently effective to inspire imitation on the part of civil and ecclesiastical authorities throughout Italy. Bishops, especially after the Council of Trent, took on a leading role. Synodal law from the second half of the sixteenth century is full of regulations designed to limit everyday contact between Jews and Christians as well as all unnecessary forms of mutual dependency. Jews were forbidden to hire Christian servants and to invite Christians to their religious services while Christians were not to enter synagogues or participate in Jewish festivities. With Jews, as in other aspects of their pastoral duties, bishops carried forth their own brand of religious intolerance, frequently independent of Rome. At the same time, new ghettos were created, often with *Casa dei Catecumeni* flanking them. By the mid-seventeenth century the two existed side by side in Bologna, Ferrara, Padova, Venice, and Florence.<sup>6</sup>

While the policies toward Jews pursued by the Roman curia, the Italian episcopacy, and the Italian states were designed with the specific goal of converting Jews, they nevertheless bear a number of similarities with many of the initiatives of the post-Tridentine Church in Italy. They were based around a series of complementary institutions firmly in the hands of the clergy, with both coercive and persuasive aims designed to slowly shape a part or all of Italian society around a specific ideal. The “claustration of the Jews,” as the ghetto was sometimes described, had obvious affinities with the claustration of religious women, and the *Casa dei Catecumeni* was only one of the numerous new charitable

institutions that were founded in the second half of the sixteenth-century: asylums for reformed prostitutes, ministries to prisoners, and assistance in hospitals were all among the "works of mercy" carried out by the Jesuits and other religious orders.<sup>7</sup> The essential similarity between these initiatives is well-demonstrated by a public ceremony staged in Rome by several members the nascent Society of Jesus in 1541. After a sermon by Diego Laínez, Alfonso Salmerón solemnly baptized a Roman Jew in the presence of Margaret of Austria, several cardinals, and the ambassadors of the Emperor and the King of Portugal. The new convert was then immediately married to an ex-courtesan with whom he had previously carried on a sinful affair, bringing the event to an edifying climax that symbolized the conversionary ideals of the Counter-Reformation Church.<sup>8</sup>

The Inquisition fulfilled several roles in this campaign for conversion. On the one hand, it provided a judicial surveillance over the Jewish populations of northern and central Italy that was primarily aimed at restricting their contact with Christians. While much of the prosecution of Jews rested outside the purview of the tribunal, which in theory governed only deviation from orthodoxy by Catholics, the Roman Inquisition took on an increasingly important role in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Gregory XIII's 1581 bull *Antiqua Iudaeorum Improbilas* gave inquisitors the authority to open proceedings against Jews for an array of infractions, ranging from divergence from orthodox Judaism to engaging in sexual relations with Christians.<sup>9</sup> But even after the bull, the Inquisition shared responsibility for prosecuting Jews for religious infractions with several other ecclesiastical and lay courts. In Rome the court of the *Vicariato*, subject to the Cardinal-Vicar of the diocese of Rome, claimed jurisdiction over a number of religious offenses committed by Jews, and its competencies were never clearly divided from those of the Inquisition. In Venice, the state administered the ghetto and maintained its own court, that of the *ufficiali al cattaver*, to judge many of the offenses over which the Holy Office claimed jurisdiction. In Tuscany, a more flexible situation seems to have prevailed, but nonetheless one in which the state intervened at its pleasure.<sup>10</sup>

But the Inquisition also had another role, that of the delicate task of uncovering and prosecuting false conversions. The only offense related to Judaism over which the Inquisition maintained an uncontested monopoly was apostasy. The crime of converting or re-converting to Judaism fell squarely under the original mandate of the Roman Inquisition, and though statistically it occupied a relatively small fraction of



the tribunal's activity, it was nevertheless regarded as extraordinarily grave. Cardinal Francesco Albizzi, a member of the Congregation of the Holy Office, asked rhetorically in his 1683 *summa* of inquisitorial case histories and jurisprudence "if so much legislation is made against heretics, what then should be said of apostates from the faith, who are so much more wicked than heretics?"<sup>11</sup> By the time Albizzi was writing, the Roman Inquisition had accrued a rich dossier of case histories and guidelines from canon law about the questions of conversion from Judaism and apostasy. The cardinals were especially attentive to questions surrounding the legitimacy of baptisms, and to the nature and degree of coercion which could be used to bring about conversions to Christianity.

In point of fact the problem of apostasy regarded a distinct social group. False conversion could take a number of forms, and the Roman Inquisition confronted a limited number of apostates to Islam among Europeans returning from periods of captivity in the Maghreb, and an even smaller group of rarefied intellectuals who were born Christians but attracted to Judaism through contact with its sacred texts.<sup>12</sup> However, both qualitatively and quantitatively, Iberian New Christians were the apostates *par excellence* in the eyes of the Roman Inquisition. The expulsion of the Jews from Spain and the opening campaigns of the Spanish Inquisition brought a large number of Jews and New Christians to Italy, where they hoped to find a more tolerant government and protection from the Spanish Inquisition. Some also sought a place in which they could safely and comfortably return to Judaism.

For the first half of the sixteenth century, preoccupied with other problems, the tendency of the papacy was to treat the New Christians with a degree of tolerance. The Roman curia was highly suspicious of the methods used in the conversions of Jews in Spain and Portugal and initially seemed well disposed toward New Christians. This is evident in the proceedings held under Alexander VI in 1498 in the immediate aftermath of the expulsions and forced baptisms in Iberia. A special commission set up by the Roman curia tried Pedro de Aranda, the Bishop of Calahorra, for judaizing; de Aranda's property was confiscated and he died in prison in Castel Sant'Angelo. But the harsh treatment of the bishop was combined with a gesture of indulgence toward the larger converso community in Rome; following the trial Alexander pardoned 203 Iberian judaizers living in Rome, welcoming them back into the church without temporal penalty in an *auto da fe* held at St. Peter's basilica.<sup>13</sup> This ambiguous attitude continued into the following decades. Clement VII issued a partial condemnation of the

forced baptism of the Portuguese Jews in the 1532 bull *Sempiterno Regi*, which extended a general pardon to the Portuguese New Christians. The bull drew on the learned opinions of Italian jurists such as Filippo Decio and Pietro Paolo Parisio, who were more inclined to consider the forced baptisms administered to Portuguese Jews illegitimate and void than their Iberian colleagues. Finally, Clement's successor Paul III invited a large group of Portuguese *cristãos novos* to Ancona in the hope that their abilities as merchants would help to develop trade in the main Adriatic port in the papal state. When the Jesuit Simão Rodrigues visited Ancona in 1554, he was shocked to find thousands of Portuguese New Christians who had returned to living as Jews in a foreign country.<sup>14</sup>

This situation was drastically altered by Paul IV in 1556, one year after the creation of the Roman ghetto. Scandalized by the presence of Portuguese *marranos*<sup>15</sup> in Ancona, he issued a decree stating that since many years and several generations had passed since the expulsion and forced conversions in Iberia, anyone arriving from Portugal or Spain would now automatically be considered a Christian by birth. Therefore, anyone arriving from those countries who practiced Judaism or sought to live as a Jew was to be automatically suspected of apostasy and tried by the Holy Office. This was not only a reversal of fortune for the converso community in Ancona; it also provided an extremely rigid standard for evaluating the religious orthodoxy of conversos throughout Italy. This harsh provision was followed by equally harsh action. The Pope sent two commissioners to Ancona to begin trials against the judaizers, an event which concluded with perhaps the most brutal punishment in the entire history of the Roman Inquisition: 25 *marranos* were burned in a single round of executions.<sup>16</sup>

This campaign, which inaugurated the Roman Inquisition's activity against judaizers, was characteristic of the brutality of the Holy Office under Paul IV. One dramatic blow served to eliminate judaizing from the papal state for centuries to come, and it stands as evidence of the ferocity with which the Congregation of the Holy Office regarded the crime. After 1556, Iberian New Christians sought out other ports in Italy, where they found a more consistent policy on the part of states and protection from the Inquisition. For these reasons, nothing quite as bloody and dramatic as the Ancona trials occurred again. Nevertheless, Paul IV's decree remained the central piece of legislation regarding New Christians for the rest of the existence of the Roman Inquisition. Inquisitors would continue to use it as a legal basis for prosecution, and Cardinal Albizzi insisted on its fundamentally sound

reasoning. The determination of the Congregation of the Holy Office to eliminate judaizing never diminished.

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Yet, it would be a mistake to consider the Ancona campaign an archetype for inquisitorial repression of judaizers. If the papacy had abandoned the policy of welcoming New Christians for purposes of economic development, other Italian states had not. The Republic of Venice, The Medici Grand Dukes of Tuscany, and the Este all invited Spanish and Portuguese New Christians into their territory and offered them varying degrees of protection from the Inquisition through a series of laws which effectively prevented the tribunal from pursuing judaizers.<sup>17</sup> Every trial became a potential source of conflict in an uneasy balance between the Inquisition's desire to enforce religious orthodoxy and the necessity of maintaining good relations with local secular authorities, on whom the inquisitors depended for a number of key responsibilities: arrests, extradition, death sentences, and in some cases, imprisonment. The decision to place an accused judaizer on trial always had to be weighed against the importance of the many other responsibilities of the tribunal and the necessity of state collaboration.

The Este Dukes of Ferrara were the first Italian sovereigns to promote large-scale immigration of Portuguese New Christians into their territory. While Ferrara was not as important a commercial center as either Venice or, later, Livorno, and lacked a port, the city nevertheless managed to attract large numbers of Portuguese conversos who had taken refuge at Antwerp by offering them generous commercial privileges and guarantees of protection from the Inquisition. In 1538, shortly after granting refuge to John Calvin in his territory, Ercole II invited the Portuguese of Antwerp to Ferrara. Despite the difficulties of crossing the Alps and the maneuvers of Imperial police who were determined to stop them from leaving Habsburg territory, large numbers of Portuguese New Christians arrived, and even more came in 1549 after Charles V expelled the *cristãos novos* from the Low Countries. The Portuguese *nazione* that developed in Ferrara became both an essential asset to the local economy and an international center of Sephardic culture, capable of producing monuments such as the Ferrara Bible, a Spanish translation of the Old and New Testaments published in 1553 and Samuel Usque's apologetic *Consolation*.<sup>18</sup>

The protection that the Este offered to the marrano community of Ferrara seems to have faltered only occasionally. When a group of newly

arrived Portuguese *cristãos novos* was blamed for bringing plague to the city in 1549, a large part of the community, as many as 500 individuals, was expelled. After the crisis had passed, Ercole II released a new safe-conduct that declared the baptism of the Portuguese Jews invalid and invited them to return to Judaism in Ferrara in much stronger terms than before. Significantly, the document was signed by the inquisitor, Girolamo Papini, and by Antonio Righini, the vicar of the Inquisition in Romagna. In the wake of Paul IV's decree and the Ancona trials, Ercole chose open defiance of papal directives by publicly renewing his safe-conduct to the *nazione portoguesa* and inviting any refugees from Ancona to come and settle in his territory. This defiance of papal directives continued largely unabated, apart from a 1570 decree by Alfonso I that all Jews must wear a distinguishing sign, a decree from which the entire Portuguese nation was eventually exempted.<sup>19</sup>

Because of the total destruction of the local archive of the tribunal, information about the activity of the Inquisition in Ferrara is limited. Nevertheless, it seems safe to say that whatever prosecution of conversos took place there did so under substantial restraints, especially prior to 1570, when the peripheral network of inquisitorial tribunals remained fragile and dependant on local civil authorities. The first inquisitor, Papini, was closely allied with the duke, and the few signs of his activity that remain suggest that he acted in full accordance with the duke's policy. In 1549 he held a meeting with representatives of the Portuguese New Christians in which he agreed to pretend that they had never been baptized and that they should therefore be allowed to live as Jews in Ferrara. Nevertheless, there is evidence of repressive activity as well: In 1553 the duke ordered the confiscation and burning of the Talmud on the instruction Congregation of the Holy Office.<sup>20</sup>

In such a situation, the cardinals supervising of the Holy Office had to intervene directly and apply political pressure on the Duke. They finally struck directly at Ferrara's *marranos* in 1580. Cardinal Giacomo Savelli wrote to Alfonso II with instructions to arrest João Lopez, also known as Samuel Abudiente, an important member of the *nazione portoguesa* and a banker with a privileged rapport with the Este.<sup>21</sup> Cardinal Savelli's request put Alfonso II d'Este in a difficult situation. While it was impossible to ignore a request from a high ranking member of the Roman curia, the fact remained that Lopez had been living in Ferrara under a safe-conduct granted by Ercole II in 1566, and he had been guaranteed protection from the Inquisition. Furthermore, the arrest of such a well-known member of the Portuguese Jewish community threatened to create problems between the duke and the *nazione*, a group of



fundamental importance to the local economy, who were constantly being courted by other cities in Italy and abroad. Faced with a difficult decision, the duke bided his time, insisting that he was still evaluating the situation. For over a year, negotiations between the duke, his representative in Rome, and Cardinal Savelli continued without either side giving in. Savelli called into question the basis for the safe-conducts issued to the Portuguese, while the duke insisted that the Holy Office present substantial evidence before he proceeded to arrest Lopez.<sup>22</sup>

A compromise was reached in January of 1581. After the Congregation had provided some details of the accusations against Lopez, the Duke succumbed to the pressure from Rome and had him interrogated under torture. Lopez admitted to having re-converted to Judaism in Ferrara and also named a sizable group of accomplices who were subsequently arrested. The news of the arrests was greeted with praise from Savelli, who asked that the duke immediately extradite the prisoners to Rome for trial; the Congregation, he explained, was carrying on a series of investigations of conversos in Tuscany, and the cardinals wanted to interrogate the suspects from Ferrara at the same time. He also made clear to Alfonso that the Holy Office made no claims to the property of the suspects, and that the duke was free to confiscate it for his own purposes. Despite this offer, which he considered dishonest, Alfonso opposed the extradition. He recognized that it would represent a further breach of the promises he had made to the *nazione*, and would also damage his prestige when the news reached other parts of Italy. Savelli countered that the Pope himself had requested the extradition and that it was not Alfonso's place to question it, though he did concede that only the principal members of the group needed to be extradited, while the rest could be kept in Ferrara. The stalemate finally ended in October of 1581, when the duke reluctantly agreed to allow the extradition of four of the prisoners to Rome. In the meantime Lopez's brother David and another suspect had successfully escaped from prison in Ferrara.<sup>23</sup>

The substance of the accusations against Lopez and his accomplices can be partially reconstructed.<sup>24</sup> Besides Lopez, the other major figure in the trial was Yosef Çerralvo, a goldsmith born in Lisbon, who arrived in Ferrara in 1545. In Italy, Çerralvo began to practice Judaism again and engaged in a program of active re-conversion and proselytism in Ferrara and Venice, even performing secret circumcisions. At the end of the Roman phase of the trials, which lasted 14 months, Çerralvo was found an impenitent heretic and sentenced to burn in Campo de' Fiori in 1583. He resisted every attempt at conversion, and died stoically, ensuring himself a place as a martyr among Jews and *marranos* throughout

the Mediterranean. Another member of the group, Diego Lopez, also refused to repent before relenting when faced with capital punishment. The original suspect, João Lopez, and his brother Aires abjured and were spared heavy punishment. Afterwards João remained in Rome, where he became a financial adviser to Camilla Peretti, the sister of Sixtus V, eventually taking on important financial offices within the curia itself. After the pontiff's death he fell from favor and immigrated to Thessalonika, where he again reconverted to Judaism. In 1595, he was burned in effigy after Innocent IX learned that he had offered to develop financial institutions for the Sultan based on those of the papacy.<sup>25</sup> The episode ended any attempt to shelter marranos in Ferrara, bankrupting Este policy under intense pressure from the Congregation of the Holy Office. It also marked the beginning of the end of the *nazione portuguesa* in Ferrara. In 1598, the city devolved to the papal state and the capital of the Este state was transferred to Modena; many of the Jewish residents of Ferrara left for more hospitable surroundings.

Venice's ghetto, founded in 1516, was the oldest in Italy, and the Venetian state welcomed all foreign Jews who made a definitive decision to practice Judaism when they arrived. After a brief period in which the Republic adopted an anti-converso policy, the authorities gradually moved toward a willingness to ignore the past identity of those who arrived in the city, provided they did not cause scandal by continuing to vacillate between Christianity and Judaism. This policy, pursued *de facto* from early in the second half of the sixteenth century, was enshrined in 1589 in a piece of legislation called the *Ricondotta*, which guaranteed free practice of Judaism and protection from inquisitorial investigations to New Christians arriving from the Iberian peninsula and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>26</sup>

This policy obviously conflicted with Paul IV's decree of 1556, but the position of the Senate prevailed because of the wide degree of control that the Republic exercised over the Holy Office in its territory. The Inquisitor of Venice operated with the collaboration of three representatives of a lay magistracy, the *tre savii sopra eresia*, along with the Patriarch of Venice and the papal *nunzio*; their approval was necessary for the inquisitor to open proceedings, making it difficult for the Roman Inquisition to proceed with a free hand against Jews and converts in the Most Serene Republic. The inquisitor also lacked any police force and was dependent upon the Senate for the arrest of suspects; extradition to Rome also proved difficult.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the Congregation of the Holy Office and the Venetian inquisitor were prevented from pursuing judaizing apostates according to the full force of canon law, and Jews and

judaizers occupied only a very small fraction of the tribunal's activity in the sixteenth century – 4.7 percent of the individual cases that came before the court, not all of them complete trials.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, very few of these cases represented anything beyond the limited practice of a family group or a couple of people. There was nothing approaching an organized and aggressive form of religious dissent similar to the Protestant heresy that had taken place in the previous decades, and none of the individuals tried represented a realistic threat to the religious unity or social equilibrium of the Venetian Republic.

The conflicts and compromises between inquisitorial and civil authorities in the Venetian republic over the prosecution of judaizers are not always obvious from the trial records themselves. The relatively light penalties handed down in most of the trials, as well as the tendency to acquit rather than convict, suggest that the Roman Inquisition was not entirely free to pursue and investigate the crime of apostasy in Venice with its usual zeal.<sup>29</sup> Yet there is also plenty of direct evidence that the Congregation of the Holy Office and the nunzio came into conflict relatively frequently with the Venetian Senate and its representatives over the question of the marranos. In 1604, the Congregation of the Holy Office wrote to the nunzio to instruct him to contest the settlement of 70 marrano families and a group of Jews from Thessalonika in Venice.<sup>30</sup> In 1608, the Senate blocked an investigation of Moses and Joseph Masaod, who had come from Portugal via Turin and immediately gone to live in the ghetto as Jews. When the nunzio protested, he was met with the argument that marranos were fundamentally Jewish, and that even the Pope had allowed them to settle in Ancona, despite the recent history of the community there. Even more controversial was the case of the Portuguese Diaz brothers, who lived in Venice as Christians for a number of years before entering the ghetto and living as Jews. After arresting the brothers on the orders of the Holy Office in 1621, the Senate freed them on the condition that they leave Venetian territory. Rome considered the case especially grievous because the apostasy had taken place in Venice rather than abroad, and it retained a privileged place in the memory of the Cardinal-Inquisitors. Many years later, Albizzi recalled the incident in his *Risposta all'Historia della Sacra Inquisitione*, a polemical response to Paolo Sarpi, writing with a note of sarcasm that “although those Senators recognized that the case was very serious, and wanted the marranos to be castigated, they nevertheless were able to able to spare themselves punishment by fleeing.”<sup>31</sup>

In these cases, the Holy Office took aim at the very individuals that the Venetian Senate had sought to protect from prosecution. Yet there

were many more cases of a more mundane variety in which the interests of the Inquisition and those of the Venetian state coincided. These were trials of marginal figures who willfully provoked the Inquisition by making blasphemous statements or continuously switching identities. In these cases the crimes involved were too flagrant and too public to be ignored by the Senate, and prosecution by the Inquisition served both to safeguard religious purity and solidify the boundaries between the Christian and Jewish communities in Venice. A good example of this type is Francisco Oliver, a Portuguese subject who had been seen in Venice dressed both as a Jew and a Christian, and who had confessed to a priest but also received assistance from Jewish relatives in the ghetto. None of the witnesses who appeared during his trial in 1549 was sure whether he was a Jew or a Christian, and he was eventually condemned not as a judaizer, but as a Jew, for having sexual intercourse with a Christian woman. He received the heavy sentence of four years' galley service and banishment from the Republic.<sup>32</sup>

The difference was not always obvious between an apostate and a Jew who violated secular laws and committed sacrilege by impersonating a Christian. Since the behavior of the accused was usually well-attested to if not openly admitted, the most important criterion in deciding such cases was whether or not the defendant had ever been baptized. If baptism records were available in Italy, conviction became more likely. This aspect of the Venetian trials seems to have aided the Portuguese and Spanish New Christians, as any records of their baptisms were more difficult to obtain, especially in a period of scarce cooperation between the Spanish, Portuguese, and Roman Inquisitions. The overall result seems to have been a Venetian system in which strong judicial and administrative pressures forced their New Christian residents to make a definitive decision between membership in either its Jewish or Christian community, while at the same time guaranteeing a degree of protection from the Inquisition to those who wanted to re-convert to Judaism.

The Medici Grand-Dukes of Tuscany pursued a similar policy and invited large numbers of Jews and conversos into their territory, beginning with two privileges issued in 1549 and 1551. At the end of the century the need to rebuild the depressed city of Pisa and to integrate the new port of Livorno into the routes of maritime trade in the Mediterranean led the Medici to expand this invitation even further. As in Venice, a raft of civil legislation contradictory to the policies laid out by Rome inaugurated the creation of this safe haven. Two public charters issued by Ferdinand I in 1591 and 1593 known as the *Livornine*



invited Jews to come to Tuscany and operate as merchants, guaranteeing in explicit terms protection from the Inquisition, "even if many of you have lived outside of our state as Christians or been known as such." Without a ghetto or a Casa dei Catecumeni, Pisa and Livorno exuded a spirit of religious liberty that was unique in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy.<sup>33</sup> The Livornine attracted large numbers of Portuguese immigrants, many of whom had used the unification of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns in 1580 as an opportunity to leave Portugal.

The Livornine posed distinct limits to the activity of the inquisitorial tribunal in Pisa and its vicariates at Livorno and Piombino. But, distinct from the Venetian situation, the relationship between the local tribunals of the Inquisition in Tuscany and the Medici state was much more harmonious, and open disputes were uncommon. There was no official representative of the state within the local tribunals of the Holy Office until the eighteenth century, and the nunzio, far from being the mouthpiece of the Roman curia as in Venice, was regarded as a potential vehicle for state interference. The reasons for this agreement are not obvious but they seem to lie in the substantial willingness on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities to conform to the wishes of the sovereign. Their own interests were largely local, and both the archbishop of Pisa and the inquisitor had numerous ties to the city and to the Medici. The inquisitor traditionally received the post of professor of theology at the University of Pisa.

The subservience of the local tribunals to the Medici translated into extremely few trials for apostasy and related crimes, especially in the first decades of the Inquisition's activity in Pisa. There were plenty of denunciations of suspicious behavior from outside, but the tribunal was slow to react, completing very few trials for apostasy and permitting irregularities which would have been difficult to allow elsewhere, or for other offences. As late as 1597, in a case involving two children who had been kidnapped by a group of Pisan Jews from their father, a recent convert to Christianity, the local Inquisition tolerated interference from the state in matters that normally belonged to its jurisdiction.<sup>34</sup>

But while ecclesiastical authorities in Tuscany were usually content to follow the guidelines of the Livornine in their treatment of Jews and conversos, the Congregation of the Holy Office took measures at a number of levels to put a stop to what the cardinal inquisitors regarded as an extremely dangerous situation taking shape in Livorno and Pisa. They feared potential instability from large-scale immigration of Portuguese New Christians into a specific environment on the Italian peninsula where they enjoyed a relatively high degree of religious freedom. The

Roman Congregation of the Holy Office, at the apex of its powers, took an especially activist role in investigating marranos in Tuscany, employing a range of strategies and creating networks that would have been difficult to conceive a few years earlier.

Spies and informers, mainly Portuguese Catholics, first alerted the cardinal-inquisitors to the inadequacy of the Inquisition in Tuscany. Under Cardinal Santoro, the Congregation of the Holy Office conducted a widespread investigation of the activities of crypto-Jewish marranos throughout Italy and particularly at Pisa, relying on such informants as the Portuguese Nuno da Costa, who made a series of denunciations, including of two relatives, in 1593 and 1594.<sup>35</sup> Another Portuguese informer, Giuseppe da Sousa, also denounced the scarce attention given to marranos by the Holy Office in Pisa to the congregation. In response, the cardinals took the unusual step of ordering the Inquisitor of Pisa to open a general investigation into the Portuguese living in Livorno and Pisa, which began in 1613. However, despite the numerous and authoritative witnesses who gave lengthy depositions describing the suspicious religious beliefs of many of the recent Portuguese immigrants, the trial ended inconclusively after a commission of theologians came to an agreement on two points. First, and most importantly, the Portuguese immigrants could not be judged on their interior convictions according to the principle that "*de occultis non est iudicandum*," hidden things are not subject to judgment by the court. Second, the fact that many of them spoke Spanish and Portuguese was not in and of itself evidence that they had been born and baptized in those countries, given that many Jews learned these languages as children even if they were born elsewhere. It was an unprecedented step: the tribunal in Pisa had openly rejected the principles which Paul IV had laid out for the investigation of New Christians and carried out its investigation according to the wishes of Florence, rather than Rome.<sup>36</sup>

Experiences such as this led the cardinal inquisitors to search for other means of confronting the presence of marranos in Tuscany. In 1595, the Jesuit Francisco Toledo wrote to Ferdinand I, imploring him to recognize the negative effects that tolerance, however well-intentioned, might have. And in November of 1599, Clement VIII threatened the Archbishop of Pisa with nothing less than a trial of his own if he did not proceed more zealously against the marranos in Pisa.<sup>37</sup> But another strategy proved far more effective than either threats or persuasion: that of extraditing judaizers to Rome for trial.<sup>38</sup> The Congregation of the Holy Office began to use extradition almost as a routine, a tactic which allowed for a much more rigorous form of justice than what

was handed down in Pisa. In 1640, Fernando di Giovanni Alvarez, an elderly judaizer born in Portugal, received one of the few death sentences handed down by the Roman Inquisition in the seventeenth century after being extradited from Pisa to Rome.<sup>39</sup>

These measures, combined with the accession of grand-dukes such as Cosimo III, who were less friendly to Jews and conversos, did much to alter the balance of power in favor of the Holy Office. Yet, for the entire early modern period, the testimony from the trials in Tuscany reveals a climate of religious freedom and even open challenges to the authority of the Tribunal that would have been hard to imagine anywhere else in Italy. Isaia Cohen da Salamanca was tried before the Holy Office in Florence in 1566 for judaizing, and during the course of his trial several witnesses stated that he had publicly declared that the tribunal had no right to try him because he was protected by a special privilege from the grand-duke. "Do your worst," he challenged his listeners, "because I live under a good prince." Over a century later, the Pisan Jew Mose Saccuto was similarly uninhibited, telling a local priest in 1677 that "You Christians think one thing but it is really another. We (Jews) have the true law, and we have books that you don't have, and that teach us what the truth is and what isn't." Saccuto followed this bold opening statement with the claim that Christ was nothing more than an ordinary man and a sinner, who the Jews had justly crucified for the sins he had committed.<sup>40</sup> Statements like these were born of a rather open atmosphere in which Jews felt uncommonly confident debating religious subjects with members of the Christian majority and had plenty of opportunity to interact with Christians due to the lack of a ghetto.

In Ferrara, Venice, and Tuscany the Inquisition's activity against judaizers was held in check by the power of the state. At the same time, the policy of the states ensured that the number of secret judaizers was kept relatively low by allowing large numbers of New Christians to quietly return to the practice of Judaism and life in a Jewish community. This was in stark contrast to the Habsburg territories in Italy, where the state fully shared the revulsion of the Roman Inquisition at the crime of apostasy and was by no means interested in condoning it in the interest of economic policy. Charles V had expelled the Jewish population of the Kingdom of Naples in 1541, just as his grandfather had done for Sicily in 1492, and his son would do for the Duchy of Milan in 1597. The illegalization of Judaism created a "Spanish" situation where the only solution for those who sought some contact with Judaism was to do it secretly. This obviously favored the formation of underground groups of the kind

that were common in Spain and Portugal – and inquisitorial authorities uncovered one of them in Spanish Naples in the autumn of 1569.

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While the Roman Inquisition followed a careful policy in the prosecution of New Christians for apostasy, applying prudence in opening investigations with a strict adherence to legal norms in trial, during the 1570s both the Spanish and Portuguese tribunals were heavily occupied with the problem of judaizing and took a more aggressive stance in prosecuting the offense. In both kingdoms the courts of the Inquisition were under the direct control of the monarch, and consequently free of the kinds of interference created by the Italian states. While isolated trials of individuals were common, frequently the Iberian tribunals moved against entire communities, simultaneously holding proceedings against tens and hundreds of people that culminated in spectacular autos de fe.

Conversos represented a social and religious problem in Spain and Portugal on a scale much larger than anything Italy ever experienced, and both the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions were founded for the express purpose of confronting the spread of judaizing among their New Christian populations. In these countries, the converso problem took on social characteristics that went beyond the simple fear of religious contamination; because of the sheer number of New Christians, the wealth and importance in public administration of a number of them, and their alliances with various factions in cities and in the royal courts, many of these trials acquired a political and social importance that outshined the drive for religious purity which constituted the formal justification for the tribunal's existence.

Also peculiar to the Iberian context was the concept of *limpieza de sangre*, a proto-racist theory which held that the heresy of the New Christians was acquired not simply through indoctrination, but as a genetic inheritance from one's parents. Heresy was thus linked to lineage, rendering every New Christian *ipso facto* suspect. When employed as a judicial criterion, the concept of blood purity had the capacity to unleash the indiscriminate wrath of the tribunal against large numbers of individuals without much attention to whether or not they had actually practiced Judaism in any significant way. This was precisely the accusation that the future Jesuit Diego de Guzmán made in 1549 when he asked Pedro Ponce de Leon, a member of the *Consejo de la Suprema Inquisición*, to intervene in a series of trials in the Andalusian



town of Ubeda. "It is really a terrible thing that these judges believe that one cannot be of this lineage [a converso] and not be without guilt, as God gives grace to those who have served him, and not according to the will of persons, as Saint Paul says in the *Acts*," he wrote, in a lengthy critique which he hoped would spur the *Suprema* to reconsider its procedures.<sup>41</sup>

In the 1560s, both the *Suprema* and the governing body of the Portuguese Inquisition, the *Conselho Geral da Inquisição*, took steps to formalize the suspicion of New Christians in the legal statutes that governed trial procedure. The *Istruccion*es redacted under the direction of the Inquisitor-General of Spain Fernando de Valdes in 1561 advised inquisitors that they should hear only trustworthy persons of Old Christian lineage as witnesses for the defense and never relatives or servants of the accused, except in cases where no other witnesses were available.<sup>42</sup> In 1573, probably following the lead of his Spanish colleague, the cardinal infante Dom Henrique, Inquisitor-General of Portugal, made an identical provision for the Portuguese tribunal. This was further supplemented with provisions that gave inquisitors greater discretion in evaluating the confessions of New Christians and allowed them to try New Christians for certain crimes without consulting the *Conselho Geral*.<sup>43</sup> The total effect of this legislation was to further weaken the position of New Christians before the Holy Office, turning suspicion of them into one of the legal foundations of inquisitorial proceedings. There is no equivalent for these norms in the juridical material of the Roman Inquisition, which despite its suspicion of New Christians, as exemplified in Paul IV's 1556 decree, never differentiated them from Old Christians as legal subjects.

Finally, there are several relevant differences between the methods of operation of the Iberian and Roman Inquisitions. While the tribunals of the Holy Office in Italy opened investigations solely on the basis of denunciations and chance discoveries, both the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions supplemented this method with the practice of an annual visit in which the inquisitor would travel to all of the localities in his district, searching for prohibited books, making inquiries, and if necessary, arresting suspects and opening investigations. The inquisitor would begin the visit by affixing an edict of faith to the doors of churches, listing a number of crimes under inquisitorial jurisdiction and instructing the faithful to denounce anyone they suspected might be guilty of committing them. The edict promised excommunication for anyone who failed to report something they knew and as a result, mass accusations frequently followed its publication.<sup>44</sup> The mobility of Spanish and

Portuguese inquisitors allowed them a much greater control over the countryside than their Italian colleagues, and the arrival of an inquisitor in a small rural community often provided the occasion for the discovery of an entire group of judaizers. In the Portuguese community of Melo a large group of New Christians was prosecuted in three stages by the tribunal of Coimbra in 1601, 1652, and 1690. During all three of these "entries," the officials of the Inquisition arrived following a denunciation and quickly found themselves overwhelmed with even more accusations. The presence of the Holy Office in an isolated community full of internal conflicts provided an opportunity to settle old scores and dredge up memories of events that had occurred decades prior.<sup>45</sup>

In Spain, campaigns against judaizers constituted one of the principal activities of the Inquisition from the beginning of its existence in 1478 until the eighteenth century. However, the cycles of the tribunal's activity were by no means uniform, and several phases of increased repression can be delineated. The earliest years of the tribunal were filled with campaigns in the urban centers of Spain that were marked by highly idiosyncratic and messianic hunts for judaizers among New Christian populations. The very first trials conducted by the Spanish tribunal began in 1481 against the judaizers of Seville, and similar campaigns took place in other cities in the same period. However, by the 1520s and 30s, the persecution of judaizers had diminished, without ever ceasing entirely. The next major wave of persecution of judaizers began in the 1560s, when inquisitors pursued entire rural communities of judaizers in Castille who had managed to evade detection for decades. Investigations of judaizers took place in Murcia and Llerena in the 1560s, and in the Extremadura, the region on Spain's western border with Portugal, in the 1570s.<sup>46</sup>

The new anti-judaizing campaigns were not the same as the ones that had inaugurated the Spanish Inquisition at the end of the fifteenth century. Not only did the Inquisition focus more on smaller rural communities than large urban centers, it was more organized and rational and less given to fanatical zeal for religious purity. This was the result of the reorganization of the tribunals of the Holy Office in Spain under Fernando de Valdés, who as inquisitor general from 1546 to 1566 had centralized the Inquisition and rationalized its procedures. Valdés' *Istrucciones* of 1561 established definitive norms regarding trial procedure that would remain in force until the tribunal's suppression in 1820. He also instituted regular inspections of the local tribunals by officials of the Suprema, ensuring a greater degree of accountability.<sup>47</sup>

The trials that took place in the Castilian town of Quintanar de la Orden are typical of these campaigns. In 1579, the inquisitor of Cuenca began an investigation of the de Mora, a family of New Christians living in Quintanar. They had been denounced by their own servants, who provided detailed information of the family's daily routines and devotional habits, including the absence of pork at the dinner table and the observance of the Jewish Sabbath. For reasons that are unclear, the inquiry stalled for nine years, until 1588, when the inquisitor, on the order of the Suprema and armed with new denunciations, imprisoned 12 members of the family in Cuenca and sequestered their property. The first set of trials ended with an auto de fe in 1590 in which two of the confessed judaizers were executed, but the campaign continued to widen on the basis of the confessions and other information collected during the trials. By the time the trials ended in 1600, 100 New Christians had been tried, and five executed. The judaizers from Quintanar appeared in no less than six autos de fe, including one held in 1591 in Toledo in the presence of Philip II. Here as in many other instances, the Inquisition ably organized a large investigation of a remote locality, proceeding methodically from the interrogation of suspects to new arrests.<sup>48</sup>

One of the most important inquisitorial campaigns of this period was the one, briefly mentioned above, against a group of presumed judaizers in Lorca and Murcia. The trials began, as frequently occurred, with a denunciation provoked by a private quarrel. The *licenciado* Quevedo publicly accused his enemy Magdalena Lopez, an elderly inhabitant of Lorca, for judaizing, and she was arrested by the inquisitor of Murcia, Salazar. Lopez's confessions under torture were enough to unleash the machinery of the Inquisition against a much larger group. Another hundred individuals were tried, and around 200 were imprisoned. After several years, Salazar's hunt spread to the much larger city of Murcia, the seat of the inquisitorial court and a city which was connected to Lorca through numerous economic and social networks. During the course of the trials in Lorca, citizens of Murcia had been implicated, and this was enough to push the Inquisition to open investigations there as well.<sup>49</sup>

However, behind this seemingly objective and legally scrupulous investigation, powerful social forces were conditioning the tribunal's movements. In Lorca, and especially in Murcia, powerful members of the city's social elite maneuvered the denunciations against their social and political rivals, a tactic which was especially effective when the rivals could be proven to be of converso lineage. In a judicial setting characterized by suspicion of testimony given by conversos and the

frequent use of torture, it is not surprising that a few rumors or a well placed denunciation could result in the arrest and conviction of hundreds of individuals, or that accusers could condition the movement of the investigation to aim, somewhat crudely, on the general social group of which their enemies were a part. Nevertheless, the inquisitor was not simply a pawn in this game acting according to the rules of a slanted jurisprudence. He was connected through ties of amity and interest to the Riquelme family in Murcia, and together they successfully undermined the rival Soto family and their clients in a bloody campaign that lasted from 1560 to 1571. During this period, the Holy Office in Murcia tried 345 individuals, of whom 135 were burned at the stake in a series of autos de fe.<sup>50</sup>

Any group of judaizers this large was itself a cause for preoccupation for the central authorities of the Spanish Inquisition, but the Murcia trials demanded the attention of Philip II and the Suprema for another reason as well. The families who had been subject to trial and humiliation had powerful resources to counter the onslaught of the Inquisition, and individuals such as Fernando de Valibrera, a member of a wealthy Murcian family that had been the target of Salazar, made articulate appeals to the king and the Inquisitor-General. Arguing in a letter to the king that the entire campaign had been built on false pretences and unscrupulously executed, and that therefore the trials needed to be reviewed by a higher authority, Valibrera insisted that he was not criticizing the Inquisition as an institution, but rather those responsible for it, "who are men, and as such, can be mistaken."<sup>51</sup> However, the most effective maneuver, which eventually forced Philip II and the inquisitors to come to terms, was the appearance of a large number of Murcian victims of the Inquisition in Rome in 1565 and 1566, where they appealed their case to the Holy See. Through relatives and business contacts in the Eternal City, these few were able to find an audience with important cardinals, eventually obtaining the ear of Pius V.

After being scolded by the king for interfering in the affairs of the Spanish Inquisition, the Pope sent a strong reply that conceded no ground: "The reasons that moved His Holiness to send someone to inspect this affair were the number of 65 men burnt, 18 of them in effigy, and a million in gold and perhaps more in confiscations and many other things besides." The victims who denounced the tribunal, he reminded the sovereign, "did not flee to Africa, but came to the Apostolic See, and they asked nothing other than to be returned to Spain under the control of a legate given by His Holiness, who would punish them if they had erred, and if they had not erred, would liberate the living and restore the

reputations and possessions of those to whom he could not give back life." In the conclusion of his letter, the Pope argued that the monarch's policies, if put into practice, would "in effect create an authority [for inquisitors], which has never been seen and perhaps never conceived for any minister *a creatione mundi*...a thing which would be worthy of great consideration by all."<sup>52</sup> With the Pope's intervention, Philip II and the Suprema relented, agreeing to an amnesty and a revision of the trials.

To an even greater extent than their Spanish counterparts, Portuguese inquisitors were single-mindedly focused on confronting crypto-Judaism among New Christians. From the first activities of the nascent tribunal of the Holy Office in the 1530s until the eighteenth century, trials for apostasy to Judaism regularly constituted over 70 percent of the total in all three of the domestic tribunals of the Portuguese Inquisition: Lisbon, Coimbra, and Évora.<sup>53</sup> The consequences of this relentless campaign on Portuguese society are only beginning to be appreciated, yet it is not an exaggeration to say that "Portuguese identity was constructed and affirmed in opposition to the crypto-Judaism of the New Christians."<sup>54</sup>

As in both Spain and Italy, the 1560s were a decisive decade for the Portuguese tribunals in a number of respects. The convergence of a series of internal and external developments allowed the Inquisition to acquire a new level of organization and authority in the same years that the Roman Inquisition was being remodeled under the guidance of Pius V. The redaction of a *Regimento* in 1552 gave the tribunal a modern organizational structure and a precise series of procedural norms, similar to those laid down in Valdes' *Istruccioness*.<sup>55</sup> This was supplemented by the presence of a vigilant administrative council, the *Conselho Geral da Inquisição*, which officially began to regulate the activities of the three mainland tribunals in 1569. In 1565–66, the tribunal of Coimbra, was reopened after being suppressed for over ten years. The decade also represented a turning-point for the tribunal's political authority within the kingdom: in 1562, the cardinal infante Henrique became regent for the adolescent King Sebastião, a position which allowed him to remove many of the impediments that the monarchy had previously imposed on the Inquisition and bring the two into closer alignment. The following year the cardinal revoked one of the final impediments to the activity of the Inquisition, a moratorium on the confiscation of property of judaizers that had been imposed in 1547 and renewed for another ten years in 1558 by his predecessor as regent, Catalina.<sup>56</sup>



These developments paved the way for a dramatic increase in prosecution of judaizing in the following decade, as prosecution of sexual and moral crimes such as blasphemy decreased.<sup>57</sup> Between 1571 and 1580, the tribunal of Évora witnessed a 50 percent increase in trials for judaizing from the previous decade.<sup>58</sup> A similar development took place in Coimbra, where 543 judaizers were convicted during the period 1567–1570, compared to 83 in the period 1541–1545.<sup>59</sup> This activity included several large-scale campaigns against groups of presumed judaizers, including the so-called Conspiracy of Beja in 1570–1572, where, for reasons that are not entirely clear, a group of New Christians falsely accused Old Christians of judaizing. The campaign was a sobering moment for the inquisitors because it revealed how easily a group of false confessions could undermine the judicial practice of their tribunal, and the incident left a profound mark on the memory of the Portuguese Holy Office. It also resulted in a series of new decrees by the central authorities which further weakened the juridical position of New Christians. The tribunal of Évora followed up the campaign in Beja with a massive action against judaizers in Campo Maior, arresting over two 288 people between 1582 and 1593, and executing 17.<sup>60</sup>

Yet despite the massive concentration of resources and manpower on the prosecution of judaizing in Portugal in the second half of the sixteenth century, those in charge of this project were not satisfied with its results. In 1592, the Cardinal-Archduke Alberto, Inquisitor-General of Portugal, sent a circular in which he lamented that all of the efforts of the Inquisition had not been enough to extirpate judaizing; not even the introduction of the inquisitorial visit had had much of an effect. It was, he complained, too great a problem for the Inquisition alone, and other methods of evangelization had to be sought out; he suggested the drafting of a catechism designed specifically for New Christians.<sup>61</sup> The cardinal's plan never came to fruition, in part because of the resistance of the inquisitors themselves, who after nearly a half century of bitter confrontation with judaizers were unwilling to make any concessions.<sup>62</sup>

\* \* \*

Naples occupied a unique place in this spectrum. On the one hand, the city was under the dominion of Spain and its social composition more closely mirrored that of Iberia than Italy. After the expulsion of 1541, there was no resident Jewish community in Naples, and consequently no opportunity for the kind of re-conversion or re-assimilation

to Judaism that characterized the experience of many New Christians in northern Italy. Instead, Naples possessed a compact and ambitious New Christian community which largely avoided open displays of sympathy or solidarity with Jews, and instead moved toward assimilation into Catholic society. The consortium led by Alfonso Sanchez and the close relationships that its members nurtured with Pedro de Toledo and his successors were highly unusual in Italy.

But on the other hand, the attempts of the viceroys to install tribunals of the Spanish Inquisition had consistently failed. While tribunals were successfully installed in two of the Italian territories subject to the Habsburgs, Sicily and Sardinia, this project failed in Naples and Milan. The tribunal of the faith, which was considered necessary for the imposition of Catholic orthodoxy, encountered the implacable resistance of the local population, which feared the tribunal and viewed it as an instrument of foreign control. This project provoked even greater opposition than the expulsion, and a series of protests that culminated in revolts in 1510 and in 1547 doomed it to failure. Prosecution of heresy fell by default to the archiepiscopal court of Naples, under the supervision of the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office.<sup>63</sup> Though the viceroys would have preferred a tribunal dependant on the Suprema, they nevertheless made a virtue of necessity and gave almost unequivocal support to an institution that served a common interest. They provided assistance to the court in arrests and extraditions, carried out capital punishments ordered by the Holy Office, and collaborated with the inquisitors on investigations.

The Neapolitan episcopal curia began to operate as an inquisitorial court around 1567–68, the same years in which the papacy, under the guidance of Pius V, began to establish an effective network of peripheral tribunals throughout Italy. A branch of the Inquisition under the control of the local church, rather than that of a religious order with strong ties to the Roman curia, was bound to retain a degree of autonomy unknown elsewhere. In Naples, this autonomy was accentuated due to several factors specific to the history of the city. The personal authority of the archbishop, who controlled one of the most important dioceses in Italy, and as a cardinal could address the members of the congregation of the Holy Office as equals, was important, but the particular difficulty of governing Naples, Italy's most populous city and the capital of its largest territorial state, was perhaps even more significant. Throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, several initiatives by Roman and local clergy to reform the ecclesiastical structures of the city of Naples had faltered because of both widespread resistance and

inability to grapple with the massive logistical problems of surveillance over such a large metropolis.<sup>64</sup>

For these reasons, the archbishop seems to have maintained a degree of independence from the control of the Congregation of the Holy Office that was unknown to most other inquisitorial courts. While inquisitors in Northern Italy corresponded with the cardinals with an almost nervous frequency, in Naples the archbishop seems to have requested the assistance of the central tribunal only on his own terms, and rather infrequently. Of the approximately 379 trials known to have been held in the Neapolitan curia between 1570 and 1580, only 55, or 14.5 percent, are mentioned in the extant letters that the Congregation of the Holy Office sent to Naples.<sup>65</sup> Of these, an even smaller number were actually followed continuously by the Congregation. Most trials were briefly dispatched by the cardinals, not to be referred to again. Everything else was conducted entirely in Naples without outside consultation.

Outside of Naples, in the rest of the Regno, inquisitorial duties were entrusted to local bishops according to the traditional practice of the pre-Tridentine church, who rarely possessed either the desire or the means to engage in elaborate proceedings which were likely to pit them alone against the populations of their dioceses with little potential benefit and no substantial assistance from outside. In theory they were flanked by the vicar of the Neapolitan curia, who from 1553 also served as *commissario* of the Holy Office in the entire kingdom, but there is no evidence that the *vicario*, who lacked the resources and perhaps also the desire to attempt such an ambitious task, ever took this responsibility seriously.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, there existed not only a wide gulf between the form of inquisitorial tribunals in southern and north-central Italy, but also between Naples and the rest of the south. While the archiepiscopal curia seems to have been relatively inactive in anti-heretical campaigns until 1564, its caseload began to steadily increase under the energetic leadership of the future cardinal inquisitor Giulio Antonio Santoro. Santoro oversaw the elimination of the last remnants of groups inspired by the Protestant Reformation, but also opened proceedings against individuals accused of many other types of crime, including apostasy to Islam, a common problem among Europeans returning from enslavement in North Africa. However, in the vast territory outside of the capital, local bishops pursued crimes pertinent to the Inquisition much more sporadically or not at all, and frequently representatives of the Spanish viceroy acted in concert with the cardinal inquisitors to make up for

their failings. The most notorious example of their collaboration was the 1561 massacre of the Waldensians of Guardia and San Sisto in Calabria, one of the bloodiest episodes in the history of inquisitorial repression in Italy, but it was not unique: The registers of the Consiglio Collaterale, the kingdom's highest executive body, are filled with orders to capture suspects in the provinces on behalf of the Holy Office and bring them to Naples for trial.<sup>67</sup>

This state of affairs, characterized by a wide degree of autonomy from Rome accompanied by a heavy dependence on the state, never satisfied the Congregation of the Holy Office. Even attempts by Roman authorities to increase their authority, such as the installation, in 1585, of a second inquisitorial tribunal in Naples under the leadership of a *Ministro del Sant'Ufficio* who was directly subordinate to Rome and authorized to open proceedings throughout the Regno, do not seem to have substantially altered the profile sketched above. The Regno di Napoli continued to remain a thorn in the side of the Congregation of the Holy Office well into the seventeenth century. In 1603, the *ministro* gave Cardinal Camillo Borghese, the future Paul V, a vivid description of the city's problems and the inadequacy of the two tribunals to combat them:

The necessity here is enormous, because all sorts of wicked and devious people – heretics, apostates, sorcerers and necromancers – arrive here, both from foreign countries and every province of Italy and the islands, and because this city is large and curious, they're always up to something, and the prelate never hears a thing about it. Even if there is a denunciation, most of the time it is never received, and even if it is received there's no investigation, and all of this comes from not paying the *ministri* who are necessary for this work. Many denunciations of very grave things end up in the cabinet of oblivion.<sup>68</sup>

While both tribunals were highly active, interrogating between 5 and 8 percent of the city's population as either witnesses or suspects between 1570 and 1600, the impression remained that the inhabitants of Naples were free to engage in religious offenses, even grave ones, without fear of disturbance.<sup>69</sup>

An inquisitorial system constructed out of a compromise between the Spanish viceroy and the Congregation of the Holy Office had no need for the kinds of diplomatic negotiation that characterized the activity of the Roman Inquisition in Venice, Livorno, and Ferrara. The Regno had none of the mercantile protections offered by the Venetian and

Florentine governments, and Naples had no ghetto to provide refuge to apostate New Christians. Yet at the same time, the hostility of the Neapolitan population toward the Holy Office and the protection and authority that the New Christians enjoyed in the city presented a new series of challenges to the inquisitors. They had to confront the logistical problems of what to their eyes quickly took on the contours of a classic Spanish *complicidad*, a crypto-Jewish “plot” put together by a number of New Christians acting in concert and under cover of secrecy.



# 3

## “*El de los Catalanes*”: The First Campaign against the New Christians, 1569–1582

In October of 1569, Paolo Tasso, the vicar of the archiepiscopal court of Naples, and a group of assistants entered the home of Lavinia Petralbes and made a thorough search. He had just heard a denunciation by one of Lavinia’s servants who accused her of an array of traditional practices associated with marranism: she would fast during unusual times of the year, and during Lent she would secretly consume *pane azzimo*, matzoh, and then attempt to erase the evidence by cleaning up the crumbs. But there was also something more unusual: the servant described how Lavinia would frequently read in private from a book covered in black leather that she kept locked in a safe when she wasn’t reading it. Tasso and his men found the book in question together with two others, a vernacular *ufficiolo della Madonna* and a copy of the letters of Pietro Aretino. The text was identified several months later by Giovanni de Pisis, a convert from Judaism, as “a copy of the cycle of prayers used by the Spanish Jews in all of their holy days” that had been translated directly from Hebrew into Spanish.<sup>1</sup> Despite the attempts of Lavinia and her daughter to destroy the remaining books in their possession after the vicar had departed, the damage had been done. With these few but incriminating clues in hand, Tasso began an investigation into the household.<sup>2</sup>

From the first depositions information emerged regarding Lavinia’s family, its past history, and its current situation. The testimony given by the servants who worked in Lavinia’s home was particularly devastating. In lengthy depositions, they described a household full of secrets and barely concealed tensions. They confirmed that Lavinia would read from the book she kept locked in a case in her room. She would never invoke the name of Jesus or the Madonna, or any other saint, and there was no religious imagery, not even a crucifix, in her bedroom. On Saturdays,

she would observe the Sabbath, and once a year, around Holy Week, she and Mundina would fast and eat *pane azzimo*. Lavinia owned both a large house in the city and an estate in the countryside outside Naples which permitted her to observe these precepts in relative privacy. Yet despite her attempts to keep it secret, Lavinia's behavior was a sore point in the household. Her husband, the late captain of the guard Joan Ruiz Fonseca, would insult his wife during arguments, calling her a "Jewish whore" and threatening to have her burned at the stake. Her children also used to insult their mother, calling her a Jew when they were angry with her, further proof for the servants that Lavinia was a bad Christian.<sup>3</sup>

In reality, the household of Captain Fonseca and his wife's circle of relations were not completely unknown to the inquisitors. Both secular and ecclesiastical authorities were sensitive to the problem of crypto-Judaism among New Christians in Naples and in the Regno, and had opened several investigations prior to 1569. In 1548, the viceroy received a denunciation of six judaizers in the capital, several of whom were members of the much larger group tried in the 1570s by the Inquisition. Camilla Beltrana, Lavinia Petralbes' mother, and her sister Mundina Beltrana were both mentioned in the denunciation, which alleged that they had both practiced certain Jewish rituals, particularly around Passover, and that they had been in contact with members of the Jewish community in the city, including Samuel Abravanel. Though it was sent to Valladolid along with testimony regarding the activities of evangelicals in the city, it doesn't seem to have led to any further action.<sup>4</sup> Gian Pietro Carafa, while still archbishop of Naples, received a letter in 1553 that congratulated him for his success in suppressing evangelical activity in Naples and implored him to "purge the city of Catalan marranos as well, since they are far worse monsters than [the heretics]."<sup>5</sup> It would take another decade before the Neapolitan curia began to function as an inquisitorial court, but when it did, the crime of apostasy to Judaism caught the attention of its judges. Only two years separate the first trials for apostasy to Judaism by the Neapolitan Holy Office in 1567 from the raid on the Fonseca home.<sup>6</sup>

The timing of the investigation becomes even more significant when one considers that Paolo Tasso had served as Mundina Beltrana's confessor in the years immediately preceding it. When Tasso became vicar *in spiritualibus* in 1568, an office which included responsibility for the prosecution of religious crimes, he may have already had plans to open a trial against her. He probably knew something of her reputation, and may have even been privy to secrets regarding her religious beliefs and practices that he had received in confession. Between the

ambiguous past that Mundina and the inquisitor shared and the previous investigations of her family, there are many signs that the opening of what would become one of the most violent and controversial campaigns against judaizers in Italy was a premeditated action against a well-defined group. While the servant's denunciation provided the pretext for action, it may have been the opportunity that the inquisitors were waiting for.

Whatever its origin, the investigation rapidly expanded, and over the following decade a campaign against New Christians of unprecedented proportions unfolded in Naples, a series of trials that tested the limits of an inquisitorial system built on strict procedural norms and close surveillance from Rome. On more than one occasion, the officials of the Inquisition in Naples concocted violent and irregular procedures that earned the rapid and unequivocal condemnation of the Congregation of the Holy Office. Even after Roman authorities took over the investigation, replacing Tasso with a more experienced inquisitor and extraditing several key suspects to Rome, the trials were hampered by disorganization and improvised procedures that confused the officials of the Holy Office and left them struggling to react. From the first interrogations in 1569, through the public executions in Rome in 1572, the Neapolitan campaign resembled some of the most infamous campaigns in the history of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, and stands as a significant exception to the image of a normalized, restrained, and bureaucratic "new Inquisition" in Italy that dominates contemporary historiography.<sup>7</sup>

Yet, despite the violence used towards a small number of suspects, the influence that the conversos had acquired over the preceding decades was by no means eliminated in the anti-marrano fury of the 1570s. Thanks to a wealth of newly available documents, it is clear that the New Christians proved more than capable of working behind the scenes in their own defense, corrupting officials, devising legal strategies, and placing pressure on the tribunal through their powerful allies within the Neapolitan state. The cardinal inquisitors in Rome watched helplessly as the conversos negotiated with their judges, offered them bribes, availed themselves of the protection of powerful aristocrats or relatives with connections in ecclesiastical and state tribunals, or fled Naples for other locations where the long arm of the Inquisition could not reach them. And after the trials had ended, the Holy Office granted a huge number of requests for commutation of sentences and rehabilitation to condemned judaizers and members of their families. Far from being easy victims of the Holy Office, the conversos of Naples demonstrated that the Roman

Inquisition, despite its pretense of efficiency and rigor, was still pliable to the blandishments and stratagems of a powerful minority.<sup>8</sup>

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After he had heard the testimony of the servants and considered more carefully the material he had discovered during the search, Tasso summoned the four women of the Fonseca household – Lavinia Petralbes, Mundina Beltrana, Virginia Fonseca, and Lavinia's cousin Porzia Bruno – before his court. After giving depositions in which they categorically denied the accusations against them, saying that they led entirely Christian lives, all four were incarcerated in the convent of Santa Maria della Consolazione.<sup>9</sup> The testimony of the suspects bore little resemblance to that of the servants, but their stories quickly began to change. Early on the morning of October 27, Porzia Bruno, after meeting with the abbess of the convent, declared to the nuns that she had changed her mind and was ready to confess to having lived as a Jew, and attempted to persuade Lavinia to follow her decision<sup>10</sup> Porzia's conversion breached the wall of silence that the vicar had initially encountered, forcing the other suspects to immediately rethink their strategies. On the same day, Mundina Beltrana admitted to a complex series of doubts, founded in a reading of scripture, around the question of the law, but she continued to insist that she was a Christian. She also admitted to having made a vow to not eat meat in the past, but refused to admit to practicing Judaism, or to name any accomplices.<sup>11</sup> Virginia Fonseca also admitted to observing the Jewish Sabbath along with her mother, though she denied eating matzoh or fasting. She described her mother, Mundina, and Porzia Bruno as being members of a "league" of Jews in Naples along with several other women.

Porzia's confession came three days later. She admitted that Lavinia's deceased mother Camilla Beltrana had taught her and Lavinia to observe the Jewish Sabbath and to eat matzoh during the months of Lent. On November 2, she appeared again before the court, describing her religious beliefs in greater detail, and for the first time named other judaizers, all of them women. The predominance of female suspects, according to a classic model of Iberian crypto-Judaism, would emerge even more clearly as the trial progressed. Immediately after this deposition, Porzia was tortured. Using the technique of the *corda* or *strappado*, in which a suspect was tied to a rope and suspended by their arms from the ceiling of the torture chamber, two of Tasso's assistants questioned Porzia for a third time, insisting that she reveal the truth regarding her

practice of Judaism and her accomplices. Despite the intense pain, Porzia resisted, and her torturer was forced to resort to a secondary tactic. He brought Lavinia Petralbes into the room, and Lavinia began to implore Porzia to confess her errors. This tactic proved efficacious: after hearing Lavinia, Porzia confessed to having been a Jew who had only observed Christianity outwardly, as a matter of ceremony. She had lied while in confession, and did not believe that the body of Christ was present in the host.<sup>12</sup>

The full story of the series of confessions and tortures in the convent did not emerge until later. In two depositions given in January and February 1571, before Tasso's successor Pietro Dusina, Porzia claimed that her initial confession was not the result of a spontaneous conversion, but that instead she had lied after the abbess had threatened that she would be burned at the stake if she didn't say exactly what the vicar wanted her to say, but that she would be freed immediately if she did. The intimidation had continued in the torture chamber, where Lavinia had told her the same thing. Overwhelmed by the pain and fear, she asked Tasso's assistant what to say. He told her to answer that she was a Jew, which she did. The only true testimony she had given, she claimed, was in her first deposition.<sup>13</sup> Lavinia provided similar testimony, saying that Tasso brought her before the instruments of torture and told her that he had a special dispensation from the Pope which allowed him to absolve her, but that if she didn't say the right things, she would be burned. Tasso and his helpers asked her questions in Latin, which she didn't understand, and did not translate them for her: "To everything they asked me I responded 'yes', and I might have said the biggest lie in the world, because everything I said, I said for fear of being tortured."<sup>14</sup>

The extraordinary violence, psychological and physical, employed by Tasso was completely beyond the norms of the Inquisition and is not easy to explain. His insistence that suspects who had already admitted to having practiced Jewish rituals confess to being 'Jews' suggests that he wanted to hear full and unequivocal statements of apostasy, of a hostile abandonment of Christianity in favor of Judaism. The concept of practicing a syncretic or Hebraized Christianity, which many of the suspects admitted to, was perhaps inconceivable to Tasso, as it had been to many inquisitors before and after him. But beyond the imperfect fit between the categories of inquisitor and *inquisiti*, it may well have been an awareness of the political implications and vast proportions of the trials that he had undertaken to push the vicar of the Neapolitan curia toward such extreme and idiosyncratic gestures. A desire to acquire decisive



information through calculated use of intimidation and violence, or to terrorize the entire potential group of suspects, may well have played a role in his actions.<sup>15</sup>

That the potential group of suspects was enormous became clear very early on. The first confessions had provided the court with the names of several other individuals, mostly women, and Tasso immediately began to investigate these new suspects, summoning large numbers of witnesses over a very short period of time. From an investigation of a single household, the trial escalated rapidly to involve members of the leading families of the *nazione catalana*: the Pellegrino, Leone, Raguante, Cartiglia, Cruilles, Conca, Vaglies, Villagut, Vitale and Astorga. The close links between these families, forged in the commercial monopolies and conquest of offices in the 1530s and 40s and solidified through intermarriage, made it a relatively simple task for inquisitors involved in the investigation of a single family to collect information regarding others. Every deposition was thick with material regarding not only the religious practices of the suspect in question, but above all with names – of friends, enemies, and relatives. The quantity of information that emerged was enormous, and Tasso decided to delegate many of the interrogations to his assistants. The three men worked extremely fast, continuing to make frequent use of torture and intimidation, and interrogated over fifty witnesses in November alone.<sup>16</sup>

This wide-ranging investigation quickly provoked a defensive reaction from the members of the *nazione catalana*. On November 7, less than a week after the first witnesses from outside the Fonseca household had been called, Margarita Vitale came forward and denounced herself to the Inquisition in a procedure known as a *spontanea comparitio* which allowed her be reconciled to the Church without any temporal punishment and spared the shame of a public abjuration.<sup>17</sup> The organizer of this special proceeding was probably Vitale's son Girolamo Vignes, the founder of the Jesuit college and a figure of tremendous influence in the most elevated political and religious circles of late-sixteenth-century Naples. During the 1570s, Vignes occupied the post of prosecutor of the tribunal of the nuncio of Naples, a position that placed him at the center of a range of affairs involving the viceroy and the papal curia, including disputes over royal and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He possessed a rare knowledge of the inner workings of the ecclesiastical tribunals, including the Holy Office, and had privileged access to their activities.<sup>18</sup>

Vignes was therefore probably aware of the revelations that had come out during the trial against Lavinia Petralbes and her family, and he also

knew that members of his own family had similar histories. Furthermore, the close relationships between the various families of *conversos* living in Naples meant that it was only a matter of time before Tasso uncovered clues or heard testimony that lead to his family. The proceedings that followed were an effective way to remove his family from suspicion and dishonor. Margarita Vitale received a privileged treatment that spared her the embarrassment of an appearance in the episcopal court. She testified in the church of San Paolo Maggiore, the seat of the Theatine order in Naples, in the presence of Tasso, a Theatine and two Jesuits. Vitale admitted to relatively little; she had observed the Sabbath and September fast on two occasions over 25 years prior at the instigation of one of her sisters, but then had quit, never again practicing Jewish rituals. Furthermore, she had already confessed these errors to a priest and received absolution. The rest of Vitale's testimony consisted of accusations of other women for judaizing, including members of the Raguantе and Pellegrino families, and her own sister Dianora, who was eventually executed in Rome. A week later, Vitale gave a second deposition in the home of Girolamo Vignes, adding some details and receiving absolution from a Theatine father. Vignes' brother Gaspar also gave a secret confession, in which he admitted to having consumed *pane azzimo* 25 years prior and accused an elderly woman of dressing corpses for burial according to Jewish custom. Gaspar had never revealed these things before, he said, because he was not sure that they were prohibited, but now that he had heard about the recent imprisonments, he thought it wise to inform the curia.<sup>19</sup>

In the wake of Vitale's testimony, 17 other members of the *nazione catalana*, predominantly women, appeared to confess their apostasy in various settings. Several were accorded similar arrangements to Vitale: hearings in San Paolo Maggiore, the Jesuit College, and private residences, before respected members of the Theatine and Jesuit orders. These arrangements served to safeguard the honor and reputation of the suspects but also kept the confessions under the control of the archbishop and provided information about other suspects to the Holy Office. Angela Conca was among those who seized this opportunity to avoid the more serious consequences of an ordinary trial. She had already been questioned by Tasso following the imprisonment of her husband Giuseppe Catalano earlier in the month. She had insisted at the time that she was entirely orthodox, that she and her husband ate pork and that they never observed the Sabbath. Five days later she returned to the *curia* on her own initiative, admitted to having judaized, and received absolution. Conca had felt the pressure of an

impending investigation against her, and sought the quickest and least difficult route of escape possible, and it is probable that others, such as the women of the Raguante family, Diana, Violante, and Laudomia, who were close to Lavinia Petralbes, denounced themselves for the same reasons.<sup>20</sup>

The members of the Cruilles family, by contrast, had not been named by any of the suspects, and they only became involved after Eleonora Cruilles heard news of the arrests of several women for having practiced Jewish rites. She called a friar and revealed to him that she too had been taught to observe the sabbath by an elderly aunt, Isabella Lopes, who had also taught her and her sisters to eat *pane azzimo* and swear to "*Iddio Grande*" instead of Jesus. She asked the priest to inform the archbishop, and she and her two sisters, Laura and Victoria, went to the curia, where they delivered their confessions to a theologian and a canon of the cathedral. The court's investigation of her family continued, eventually focusing on her brother Cesare, who was tortured before finally being found suspect of apostasy and allowed to abjure secretly.<sup>21</sup>

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The trials in Naples had gone forward up to this point under the exclusive control of the archbishop of Naples and his assistants, led by the vicar.<sup>22</sup> The Congregation of the Holy Office began observing the activity of the curia sometime around February 16, 1570, when its members began to read through 27 of the trials that had been sent from Naples to Rome.<sup>23</sup> Though the content of these discussions is unknown, their outcome was a decision by Roman authorities to take a pronounced role in the trials through extraditions and close supervision of the activity of the Neapolitan curia. Little over a month later, the cardinal inquisitor Scipione Rebiba wrote to Mario Carafa and asked him to turn Cesare Cruilles, Girolamo Pellegrino, Francesco Cartiglia, and Giuseppe Catalano over to the viceroy, who would then send them to Rome by sea. Within a few months, all of these men, except for Francesco Cartiglia, had been transferred from Naples to Rome, where the central tribunal of the Holy Office began its own investigation.<sup>24</sup>

Then, in a meeting on July 12, 1570, the congregation issued a strong condemnation of Tasso's conduct during the previous year, decreeing that the trials of Cesare Cruilles and others had constituted a "notorious injustice" on the part of the Neapolitan tribunal, and that the entire proceeding was to be reviewed and the trials re-done.<sup>25</sup> The decision was presented by the prosecutor of the Roman Holy Office, who referred to

a recent piece of legislation that stated that sentences released by the tribunals of the Holy Office in favor of heretics that were contrary to the "style" or jurisdictional prerogatives of the Holy Office were to be considered null and void.<sup>26</sup> The provision was intended to prevent heretics from escaping from justice because of poorly conducted trials, and had the additional goal of strengthening the supremacy of the Congregation of the Holy Office over the local tribunals of the Inquisition and all other judicial authorities in the matter of heresy. The case at hand was obviously different: no one had received excessively lenient treatment at the hands of Tasso. On the contrary, it was the genuine displeasure of the Congregation at the excesses and irregularities of the trial that provoked the decision, which clearly placed the bizarre scenes that had unfolded at Santa Maria della Consolazione outside of the acceptable conduct of an inquisitorial court.

This clear decision cancelled in a single blow the enormous amount of work that the Neapolitan tribunal had undertaken from October 1569, and also seems to have sealed the fate of Paolo Tasso, who was removed from the post of *vicario generale* of the archdiocese of Naples sometime in the second half of 1570.<sup>27</sup> He was replaced at the head of the Neapolitan *curia* by Pietro Dusina, a trusted collaborator of Pius V, who began to revise the trials that Tasso had mishandled in January of 1571. It was complicated work: Dusina had to do his best to separate the true from the false by both analyzing the flawed earlier testimony and by examining witnesses and suspects for further information without allowing them to take advantage of the court's previous mistakes. The first person to testify was Porzia Bruno, who gave a vivid description of the numerous threats and irregularities that had taken place before and during her examinations under torture over a year before. But she was not the only one with heavy complaints against Tasso. Sibilial Falcona, 85 years old, lamented that she was physically ruined after an interrogation under torture, and that she couldn't talk anymore. Angela Conca protested that even the notary had colluded in the falsification of her earlier testimony: there were things written in the copy of her earlier examination that she had never said.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, the revision of the past was not total, even among those who were involved in the most violent and obscure phases of the previous trial. Virginia Fonseca told the court that she had nothing to add to her earlier deposition, despite having been present in the convent when her mother and aunt had been terrorized by Paolo Tasso.

Yet, despite Dusina's rigor, the trials continued in an atmosphere of increasing tension. Lucretia Vaglies, a member of one of the banking

families, told the priests who came to her home on behalf of the curia that she was a good Christian and had no intention of coming to testify and bringing shame upon her children unless she was ordered to do so by the viceroy himself. She would sooner kill herself, she vowed, or throw herself at the feet of the viceroy, than appear in court.<sup>29</sup> Though she eventually was forced to relent, Vaglies' bold and desperate gesture was no doubt calculated to take advantage of the controversy which surrounded the trials and the increasing discomfort of civil authorities at the way they were being conducted. In July of 1571, the newly arrived viceroy cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (1517–1586) wrote a letter to Rome describing a situation of near crisis in the city – the huge number of people involved in the trials, which he estimated at around 500, between the suspects and their families, and the new prisons that the archbishop was hastily building to hold them, had fed public fears of the Inquisition, and especially of Roman interference in the Regno. He had asked the archbishop to halt the construction of the prisons and suspend the trials, but there was still a significant risk of a revolt.<sup>30</sup>

The cardinal inquisitors reacted quickly to the viceroy's concerns. On July 1 a large public abjuration ceremony was held in the cathedral, in the presence of Granvelle, several dignitaries, and a huge crowd of Neapolitans. After careful persuasion by a local Jesuit who visited them in prison and heard their confessions, 12 women renounced their former apostasy and were re-received into the church, while four others refused to abjure.<sup>31</sup> On July 22 another public abjuration of ten judaizers took place in the cathedral, at the end of which Dusina wrote to the cardinal inquisitors, describing the enormous and unprecedented effort that the trials had required and begged their pardon for any mistakes he had made.<sup>32</sup> More abjurations followed through the beginning of 1572.<sup>33</sup>

These abjuration ceremonies, which resembled in many respects the autos da fe held by the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal, were carefully planned to avoid further antagonizing the opposition to the Holy Office in the city. They placed an emphasis on those conversos who admitted to their error and were reconciled to the church, while the punishment of the unrepentant took place out of sight and away from Naples. The four women who refused to renounce their crypto-Judaism, Isabella Raguante, her mother Dianora Vidal, and the sisters Eleonora and Geronima Pellegrina, were sent to Rome, where Pius V consigned them to the governor of the city for execution. The sentence was carried out on February 8, 1572 at Ponte Sant'Angelo, where the women were joined on the scaffold by Domenico della Senia, a Sicilian judaizer who



had abjured in Naples in 1567 and had been found a relapsed heretic in 1571. The five judaizers all demonstrated sufficient contrition that they were granted the mercy of being hung before their bodies were burned, rather than burned alive.<sup>34</sup> This same sentence was given on July 3 to Girolamo Pellegrino, who had been languishing in the Roman prisons of the Holy Office since early 1570, after the consultors of the Holy Office almost unanimously voted that he was a false convert and a relapsed judaizer.<sup>35</sup>

The ruthless treatment of the unrepentant was combined with clemency towards those who had been found suspect of apostasy but had recognized their error. Livia Fernandes, who had denounced herself to Tasso in 1569 and given another lengthy confession to Dusina in 1571, was spared by a special pardon from the Pope in June 1572. Instead of being considered an impenitent or relapsed heretic, as the evidence indicated, she would be sentenced only as a first-time offender. She was given relatively light punishments: the requirement to wear the *habitello* that denoted her as a penitent heretic, and a series of penances assigned by the court. A similar arrangement was made for Angela Fernandes, who had also denounced herself to Tasso at the beginning of the trials. Diana Raguante, who had confessed to apostasy as well as to having lied in confession, was also given a special pardon from the Pope in December 1572, and was sentenced to perform a series of penances and to incarceration in her home.<sup>36</sup>

These public condemnations were an occasion, however premature, for the Roman Inquisition to declare victory over the conversos of Naples. The abjuration ceremonies in the capital, as well as the executions in Rome, were demonstrations of power that brought the events in Naples to an apparent conclusion, a triumph of Christian truth over Jewish falsehood, with sentences that fully reflected the severity of the crimes in question and distributed in equal parts mercy for the penitent and cruelty towards those who defied the tribunal. All of the uncertainty, conflict, and unease that had characterized a highly anomalous and complicated series of trials were placed aside in favor of a celebration of the righteousness of the Holy Office which was announced throughout Italy in *avvisi* and enshrined in the civic history of Naples, retold in chronicles throughout the early modern period.<sup>37</sup>

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The spectacular executions in Rome and the heavily symbolic ceremonies in Naples, may have created the illusion of completion, but 'the

affair of the Catalans' (*el de los catalanes*), as Philip II referred to it in a letter congratulating Granvelle for his careful management of the situation, was far from over.<sup>38</sup> Underneath the image of a newly purged and devout city lay a more complex reality; as the inquisitors recognized even at the time, there remained a number of suspects who had not been tried, others whose trials remained incomplete, or more troubling, still others those who had been sentenced, released, and were implicated a second or third time in marrano practices. From 1572 to 1580, a series of vicars and their collaborators continued to investigate and prosecute New Christians, albeit at a much slower pace than before.

The constant point of reference for the officials of the curia who sought to find their way through this morass was the documentation compiled by Pietro Dusina, who left Naples in 1573, expelled by the viceroy after a banal conflict over jurisdiction. He went to Rome, where he joined the Congregation of the Holy Office as a consultant and continued to follow the progress of the investigation from afar.<sup>39</sup> The volumes of testimony that he had compiled and carefully indexed provided a rudimentary guide to what had come before as well as a mass of clues and accusations that provided material for the curia to investigate in the future. Many of the trials undertaken by his successors began not with denunciations, but with simple references to earlier pieces of testimony from the period 1570–1571 that implicated the suspect in question. Even in the 1580s, at the very end of the campaign, the curia was still proceeding largely along the lines laid out by Dusina's investigation a decade prior, and the archbishop wrote to inquire whether it was necessary to call witnesses a second time who had already testified in 1571, or whether their old depositions were still valid, remarking that "this problem arises in almost all of the trials for Judaism."<sup>40</sup>

If the guidance of Dusina provided a degree of continuity and organization to the tribunal's work, there were other factors that severely hampered it. In 1578 the prosecutor of the curia sent a harsh letter to the Congregation of the Holy Office that described the Neapolitan tribunal of the Holy Office as wracked by incompetence, inefficiency, and disorganization. Important procedures, such as arrests, were often handled without regard for protocol and entrusted to low-ranking officials. The papers of the Inquisition were left in the open, among them "the summary of the trials for Judaism made by Signor Dusina when he was vicar, which contains the accusations against each person, page by page, was sitting where it could be taken and read by anyone." The volumes containing the records of the trials were similarly left about, so that "even the servants read them, and they knew the secrets of the trials

of religion before they were finished."<sup>41</sup> This was accompanied by the incompetent handling of some of the trials, which in many cases were conducted by mere *scrivani* who were untrained in examining witnesses. The confusion was such that many important proceedings had been left incomplete. The following year, the archbishop wrote to the cardinal inquisitors to inform them that he had begun to review the trials for Judaism, but that he and his staff hadn't been able to do anything but reorganize the transcripts, which were all out of order.<sup>42</sup>

The confusion of the episcopal curia in the 1570s provided numerous opportunities for the New Christians to avoid prosecution or lessen its effects. One of the most common and effective strategies for avoiding trial was to flee beyond the city of Naples, where the power of the Holy Office to intervene was sporadic and weak, based largely on temporary alliances with local religious and civil authorities. For the conversos, many of whom occupied offices in far-flung regional centers such as Bari, Taranto, and Sessa, and who maintained connections with local aristocrats, this was an especially attractive option, and the inquisitors' correspondence is full of references to suspects who had ventured into the furthest reaches of the Kingdom of Naples. But even those who remained in the city often possessed the means to resist the tribunal, and even after the subtle interventions of Girolamo Vignes to safeguard his family's honor in the early stages of the campaign, the New Christians were capable of calling on extended networks of clients, allies, and relatives to aid them against the Inquisition, which often appeared too disorganized and isolated to resist them.<sup>43</sup>

Maria Cartiglia, daughter of Francesco Cartiglia and Violante Raguante, had been interrogated in 1571 and again in 1572, after Margarita Vitale had implicated her in the practice of Jewish rituals and Beatrice Leone had given her name under torture. Maria had denied all involvement during this period, but many other witnesses placed her among the group of judaizers. Ultimately, however, her first trial was quietly suppressed. Her husband Giovan Vincenzo de Lagni, a nobleman and member of the *seggio* of Capuana, had privately asked Orazio Galluccio, a relative of his who served as an assistant to Paolo Tasso, to persuade the archbishop to drop her case. The relative referred the request to Carafa, who agreed, saying that he would not request further testimony from Maria.<sup>44</sup>

The protection of her husband might have sufficed to avoid trial completely had he not changed his mind. In October of 1580, Maria was called to testify before the curia again, this time following a denunciation by De Lagni himself, who had discovered Maria's infidelities

while he had been imprisoned on criminal charges, and was seeking revenge. De Lagni provided some of the most damaging and direct testimony, revealing that his wife had observed the Sabbath on Saturdays by not working and preventing her maids from working, and that she consistently refused to eat pork, protesting that it made her feel ill. Cartiglia was imprisoned at Santa Maria della Consolazione, and she began a vigorous and expensive defense of her cause. She engaged several lawyers on her behalf who drafted numerous briefs requesting the testimony of witnesses in far-flung corners of Apulia and others that detailed the numerous potential witnesses who were enemies and therefore unreliable. These maneuvers prolonged the trial significantly, and in the summer of 1582, as her imprisonment continued into its twentieth month, Maria received permission to leave the convent in order to improve her health, provided she did not leave the city of Naples.<sup>45</sup>

Giovanna Malvicina and her sister Mancia were able to call on an even more powerful protector during their trial in the late 1570s. Mancia's husband Annibale Moles (d. 1595), one of the ten presidents of the Sommaria, the highest fiscal tribunal in the kingdom, an authoritative lawyer and magistrate and himself a member of a Catalan family of possible converso origin, was privy to reserved information about the trials of the three women and worked hard to put an end to the investigation. In 1578, the vicar Silingardo wrote an embarrassed letter to the cardinals explaining that not only had Moles come into possession of copies of the trials held against the Malvicina in 1572, a clear violation of the secrecy of the tribunal, he had come to the curia to complain that the women had already been tried and demanded their release. When he failed to obtain the release of the women, Moles demanded that his copies of their depositions be returned to him. The vicar duly complied with the request of a high-ranking member of the state, and gave him new copies of the depositions. After the nuncio in Naples discovered this deviation from practice and the vicar's suspicious role in it, Silingardo revealed the affair to Rome, begging for the mercy of the cardinals, and explaining that he knew "how important loyalty and secrecy are in matters of religion." The three women remained in Rome, where they had been transferred in the meantime, and were questioned there, before being released without penalty in March 1579.<sup>46</sup>

For those who were unable to avoid trial, sentencing provided equally fertile terrain for negotiation, especially in the wake of the unrest surrounding the conclusion of the first trials in 1572. The viceroy's anxiety combined with the judaizers' considerable political and financial resources created ample space for negotiation, and, on two occasions,

two different archbishops of Naples attempted to alter penalties in favor of lighter sentences, at the request of the families of the accused judaizers and the viceroy. This kind of mediation was in stark contrast to the kind of justice that the Congregation of the Holy Office sought to promote, and episodes such as these are extremely rare in the history of the Italian tribunals.

The first of these involved negotiations over the sentencing of Lavinia Petralbes and Porzia Bruno, two of the first suspects and among those most heavily implicated in the practice and dissemination of crypto-Judaism in Naples. In May of 1573 Mario Carafa had written to the Congregation of the Holy Office to tell the cardinals that he had condemned Lavinia and Porzia to immuration, solitary confinement in an enclosed and poorly lit space, but that the viceroy had intervened, arguing that such a cruel example of the archbishop's justice would "create a great scandal among the *popolo*." Instead, Granvelle had suggested that he should write to the Congregation of the Holy Office and ask what other penalty might be given as an alternative. Replacing immuration with a normal incarceration was impossible, Carafa argued, because he lacked prisons that were adequate for women.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, he proposed a better solution: he could envision letting the two women off with a lighter sentence of house arrest if Lavinia and Porzia gave a large "*elemosina*" or pious donation to the convent where they had been incarcerated during the trials. He expressed concern for Lavinia and Porzia's daughters, who otherwise would be left alone in the world and exposed to great danger. Besides, the nuns needed some money to finish the construction of a small church they were building, and he had been able to procure them funds this way in the past. A little over a month later, on the third of June, Carafa wrote to the cardinals again, requesting a response to his previous letter and briefly recapitulating the arguments in favor of his plan.<sup>48</sup>

There is no trace of the response of congregation to this request, but a letter sent to the cardinal inquisitors the following year by Carafa's *vicario* Vicedomini demonstrates that an agreement was made. Vicedomini began by defending himself against some accusations contained in a previous letter from Cardinal Rebiba, saying that he had never lessened any penalty in a trial in exchange for money, but admitted that "...in the first weeks I began working here, a lengthy incarceration given to Lavinia Fonseca, a judaizer, was commuted to fifty ducats, a part of which was given to the nuns of la Sapienza and another part to the nuns of la Consolazione, all of which, as I understood it then, was on the order of the Holy Office."<sup>49</sup> By August of 1573, Lavinia had



been moved from Santa Maria della Consolazione to the archbishop's prisons, where another prisoner found that she had successfully corrupted the prison guards, who allowed her to receive visitors and send letters to people outside of prison.<sup>50</sup>

A similar situation arose several years later during the sentencing of two other women. In a letter to the Congregation of the Holy Office written in July 1579, a new archbishop, Annibale di Capua, asked for clarification on the penalties to be assigned to Laura and Beatrice Raguante. Both had been found suspect of heresy and therefore had to go through the formal ceremony of abjuration, but di Capua wanted to know whether they should be forced to go through a humiliating public abjuration or a secret ceremony that would spare the honor of the women and their family. He preferred a secret abjuration, pointing out that many of Laura's sons were important lawyers who had received high offices in the viceroyalty. Additionally, Beatrice was a little more than a "*giovane donzella*" who would soon be searching for a husband, and it seemed unnecessary to cause her great dishonor.<sup>51</sup>

After the Congregation discussed the case, they sent word of their decision to Naples.<sup>52</sup> The message was unequivocal: Laura should be tortured for further information about her accomplices and then abjure, in public, on a festival day, a circumstance no doubt intended to maximize the public shame of the occasion. No decision was given in Beatrice's case, but the cardinals requested an extensive summary of her confessions. Several months later, on September 11, Cardinal Savelli wrote to di Capua again, informing him that Laura Raguante's son had come to Rome to request a secret abjuration for his mother, but that the congregation had decided not to change the original sentence, and that di Capua should go ahead and execute it. Then, on October 10, Savelli communicated the congregation's decision concerning Beatrice Raguante: She too, as a judaizer, should be given a public abjuration, but if the archbishop had any reasonable objection to this, he should let the cardinals know.<sup>53</sup>

The three letters that Savelli sent to Naples left little doubt about the congregation's intentions, but di Capua nevertheless accepted Savelli's invitation to present his objections, on which he elaborated at greater length in a letter dated October 23, 1579:

I can only modestly say to you that [Beatrice] is a young lady of 17 years of age, and ready for marriage, and that her father and her uncle serve his majesty in very high and honorable offices. Her brothers are also highly qualified jurists, some of whom have served as

*auditori regi di provincia*. And beyond these things, it is worth noting that in the past young women have been allowed to abjure privately in this city. So, it would seem to them that we should extend this pardon to them, or at very least, for the sake of the family's honor, important for both the mother and the daughter, they should abjure in a side chapel with the doors open and the members of the curia present.<sup>54</sup>

Cardinal Savelli responded several days later, on October 31. He reprimanded di Capua for informing Laura Raguante's family about the punishment that the congregation had designated for her, and for agreeing to postpone the abjuration in order to see if Rome might finally allow a secret ceremony instead of a public one, writing that "it is never a good idea to make public the orders that come to you, and one should never postpone anything on behalf of one of the parties in the trial." Instead he instructed di Capua to immediately execute Laura's sentence and write back once he had.<sup>55</sup>

Savelli wrote again in December of 1579 to inquire why he had still received no word of the abjuration from di Capua, and instructed him to write back. When he did, the archbishop no longer had any objections to offer, and simply stated that he had waited to execute the sentence in order to gather a larger group of penitents who would all perform the ceremony together. But considering how long this had taken, he now declared that he would go ahead and hold the ceremony for Laura Raguante. Beatrice's ceremony would wait until some of the final procedures in her trial were finished, however.<sup>56</sup> In this instance, it is clear that the cardinal inquisitors had little tolerance for the archbishop's willingness to mediate on behalf of the families of the judaizers, and they were ultimately successful in enforcing their will, at least in the case of Laura Raguante. But the archbishop's behavior – his contacts with the Raguante to inform them of the penalties that were in store for them, and his persistent advocacy of their cause – are all signs of the same kind of interference by the suspects that had compromised the activity of the Holy Office during the entire campaign.

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By 1580, the campaign against the New Christians in Naples, which had produced 15 volumes of documentation, was moving slowly to an end. When the dust had settled, it was clear that a decade of trials and sentences had inflicted a severe blow on the community of New Christians

in Naples. The Pellegrino clan had been devastated by three capital sentences in 1572 that removed the leader of the family Girolamo from the scene, as well as his sisters Eleonora and Geronima, both of whom had escaped from the Inquisition in Spain only to fall victim to it in Italy. With most of the male members of her family imprisoned or dead, Caterina Pellegrina sought out the wife of Antonio Puentes, former secretary of Pedro de Toledo, and recounted the "travails of her family."<sup>57</sup> The social ascent of the family and its position in the financial affairs of the kingdom were permanently interrupted, and their wealth dissipated after confiscation of property and rents devolved to others. The survivors were left under the control of the Congregation of the Holy Office, which exercised a close surveillance over their lives. In 1577, in consideration of "his good morals and sound doctrine" the cardinal inquisitors granted an allowance to Girolamo's son Giovan Luigi, that permitted him to assume the rank of doctor and teach in the university. Though Giovan Luigi was never implicated his father's crimes, canon law dictated that the congregation extend the punishment of the father to the son.<sup>58</sup>

But the same was not true for all of the families in the *nazione catalana*. The Sanchez, Pellegrino's old associates, had been barely touched by a campaign that implicated many of their closest collaborators and clients. On the contrary, the 1570s were a period of continuing success for the sons of Alfonso Sanchez sr. After receiving the title of marchese and being officially admitted into the nobility of the kingdom, Alfonso jr. acquired another important territory, Sant'Arpino, where he began the construction of a palace in 1574; his brothers Luigi and Giulio were named governors of important cities in the provinces, including L'Aquila, Nola, Bari, Lanciano, Isernia, Taranto, and Capua. A chronicle from the seventeenth century reports that in 1582, after uncovering evidence that Alfonso Sanchez sr. had been a crypto-Jew, the Duke of Osuna had his tomb removed from the family chapel in the church of the Santissima Annunziata and placed in the sacristy, a way of discreetly dishonoring a man who had successfully avoided justice, from courts inquisitorial and otherwise, for his entire life. Though this anecdote has never been confirmed through archival documentation, it suggests that the Sanchez were not entirely alien to the religious habits which many of their associates shared.<sup>59</sup>

The main effect of the trials on the Sanchez was probably to set them more firmly on the path of social and religious assimilation. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the sons of the Marchese di Grottola had embarked on ecclesiastical, military, and legal careers that

moved them into positions of influence in the kingdom equal or greater to those occupied by their father and grandfather. Alfonso III, after a naval career, inherited his father's land and titles, while his younger brothers entered into administrative positions in the capital. Giovanni became a lawyer, and eventually a judge in the criminal court of the *Vicaria*, flanked by a cousin, also named Giovanni, who served in the civil court. Gabriele took on holy orders and was appointed by Philip II to the post of *cappellano maggiore*, responsible for the administration of all of the ecclesiastical benefices and property under royal patronage, while the youngest brother, Antonio, after military service in the Low Countries, became governor of Lecce and Barletta. The basis for a continuous presence at the highest ranks of the nobility of the kingdom were assured by advantageous marriages with some of the oldest families in the kingdom, including the Spinelli, Caracciolo, Brancaccio, and Ruffo.<sup>60</sup>

A more equivocal fate befell the Vignes family, which suffered the loss of two members in the Roman executions of 1572, but largely escaped the worst humiliations and punishments of the Inquisition in Naples. The head of the family, Girolamo, emerged from this period with his reputation intact and continued to collaborate with the local court of the Inquisition and the Jesuits. He remained a privileged correspondent in Naples for the Roman leadership of the society, who frequently called on him for financial problems related to the management of Jesuit colleges and missions both in southern Italy and abroad. He orchestrated the purchase and renovation of the magnificent palace confiscated from the Prince of Salerno after his rebellion and abandonment of the kingdom, which was consecrated in 1584 as the principal Jesuit church in the city, and he arranged foundations of numerous colleges in the provinces of the kingdom. The society also called on him to gather funds in the kingdom for the struggling English college of Reims in France, where irredentist English Catholics took refuge in increasing numbers during the reign of Elizabeth I. Finally, he remained in close contact with representatives of the Holy Office both in Naples and Rome, continuing to serve occasionally as an informant of the activities of Protestants in the city. Girolamo's brother Gaspar, though implicated as a minor participant in the crypto-Jewish conspiracy, also emerged relatively unscathed to participate in civic life in the 1570s. He was among the first members of a prestigious confraternity founded in 1576 to convert Muslims and Jews who arrived in the city and guide them toward an eventual baptism, and in 1588 the Jesuits allowed him the privilege of choosing a burial site in their church.<sup>61</sup>

The broadest effect of the Neapolitan campaign of 1569–82 was not to eradicate the practice of crypto-Judaism, but rather to reinforce and accelerate a process that was already underway: the assimilation of Naples' New Christian population into the majority, through a process of acculturation, intermarriage, and adaptation. All of the families under investigation, regardless of the way they were treated during and after the investigation by a zealous crew of inquisitors, demonstrated tendencies towards assimilation before the opening of the trials that were accentuated afterward.

In this respect as well, the Neapolitan case is analogous to that of other communities in Iberia and in the overseas colonies. Linda Martz's study of the important New Christian community of Toledo in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, based on a careful comparison of inquisitorial records and anti-converso propaganda with accurate notarial and administrative records, traces a similar process in a much larger and older converso community that had participated in many of the central struggles between Old and New Christians in Castile. Successive waves of inquisitorial prosecution at the end of the fifteenth century, combined with a sporadic and uneven application of blood purity statutes in the city's cathedral chapter and municipal offices in the following century, created a strong motivation for conversos to de-emphasize their belonging to a religious and ethnic minority, without necessarily diminishing their wealth or limiting opportunities for social advancement. The Herrera family, after accumulating wealth and status under the leadership of Juan (ca. 1510–1585), who acquired the position of *regidor*, were able to effectively erase the memory of their Jewish ancestry and use their wealth to move ever higher on the social scale. The heirs of Juan de Herrera, ignoring a *limpieza de sangre* statute imposed by the crown in 1566 that prevented conversos from taking municipal offices, entered the city council anyway, amid allegations of bribery and fraudulent genealogical examinations. In the 1590s, one of Herrera's grandsons even secured a place in one of the prestigious Aragonese military orders despite the accurate claims of his enemies that he was a New Christian, and in 1603, a member of another converso family was allowed to become a familiar of the Inquisition in Toledo, a sure sign that the ideology of pure blood was losing its hold even in the city where it had first been enshrined in law.<sup>62</sup>

But while the *nazione catalana* was ever more immersed in Neapolitan society, the need of the Spanish viceroys for the kinds of services that the Sanchez and their clients had provided in the past was still present. In the final decades of the sixteenth century, as the finances of the



vicerealty worsened under continuous fiscal pressure from Spain, a new and even more uncertain period began in the history of the Neapolitan state, one which presented even greater opportunities for able financiers and speculators. Once again, a group of New Christians, this time of Portuguese origin, migrated from Iberia in search of economic opportunity and found extraordinary opportunities for enrichment and political protection at the court of the Spanish viceroys in Naples.

# 4

## The Rise of the Portuguese Merchant-Bankers, 1580–1648

In 1580, as the Neapolitan curia's prosecution of the *nazione catalana* moved to a conclusion, a series of events occurred that would further alter the religious and social landscape of the Mediterranean. After Henry I of Portugal died without issue, his kingdom entered a dynastic crisis that pitted Philip II of Spain, who claimed inheritance through his mother, against a pretender from the native aristocracy, Antonio, the Prior of Crato. A brief war resulted in Philip's favor, and he was crowned king of Portugal, uniting the Iberian Peninsula in its totality under a single monarch for the first time since the end of the Roman Empire. The Habsburgs controlled the country for another sixty years, until the House of Bragança claimed the throne in 1640, returning it to the control of a Portuguese dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

One of the consequences of this political transformation was a shift in the balance of power between Portugal's New Christians and the Portuguese Inquisition. The wealthy conversos of Lisbon and other Portuguese cities recognized a political opportunity in the unification to gain the upper hand in their ongoing struggle by appealing to the new king and negotiating directly in Castile against the Holy Office. This process began in earnest after the king's death in 1598; under Philip III of Spain a faction at court led by the Duke of Lerma acquired the complete confidence of the monarch and quietly began to negotiate with the Portuguese conversos, attracted by the large sums of money that the group's representatives promised in exchange for privileges and increased liberty. In 1601 Philip III signed a decree that allowed Portuguese New Christians to emigrate from Portugal for the first time, provoking an exodus from Portugal to other parts of Europe and the Mediterranean. Prevented from emigrating by royal edict during previous decades, they now streamed across the border into Spain, mixing

with the local population of New Christians and provoking a new offensive by the Spanish Inquisition. Italian cities, particularly Livorno and Venice, were also important destinations for these refugees.<sup>2</sup>

In 1605, the New Christians obtained an even more important concession – a general pardon from the papacy after a payment of 1.7 million ducats to the king and several of his ministers. This enormous sum, to which New Christians from all over the Empire contributed, demonstrated the extraordinary organization and cohesion of the Portuguese conversos, and represented a major political defeat for the Holy Office, which had done everything in its power to oppose it. The negotiations over the general pardon marked the beginning of a fateful relationship between Portuguese New Christian *hombres de negocios* and ministers of the Spanish crown, which was destined to last for several decades, a period in which Spain was engaged in warfare on several fronts in Europe and in constant need of money.<sup>3</sup> Madrid in the 1630s began to attract New Christians in large numbers, who saw new opportunities for enrichment at court that gave them the courage to confront the still-widespread mistrust of their origins and the ever-present inquisitors who continued to open investigations for crypto-Judaism against New Christians, in Madrid and elsewhere, throughout this period. Throughout most of the first half of the seventeenth century, a cautious alliance between the reigning factions at the Spanish court and wealthy and skilled New Christian merchant-bankers and bureaucrats altered the condition of the conversos in Iberia, opening new opportunities for some while exposing others to a renewed wave of inquisitorial persecution.<sup>4</sup>

In the aftermath of the economic crisis of the 1620s and the subsequent bankruptcy of the Spanish monarchy, the Portuguese New Christian merchants and financiers, with their access to markets and capital from across the globe, effectively displaced the Genoese bankers who had sustained the military finances of the Spanish crown in the previous century. It was a shift full of implications both for the European economy, which, as James Boyajian notes, was moving inexorably from an axis in Mediterranean trade to one based in the Atlantic, and for peninsular society, no longer capable of resisting entirely the upward pressure of a stigmatized, but wealthy and politically capable minority. The tacit alliance between New Christian finance and the Spanish crown reached its apex under Philip IV, whose minister, the Count-Duke of Olivares, undertook an ambitious program of reform that aimed to introduce new groups into roles of power within the court and in government. Olivares' plan included a loosening of requirements of blood

purity, thus providing a partial opening to New Christians. The main issue was the participation of Portuguese bankers in the *asientos*, the loans taken by the crown to fund key elements of its policy, not least of which was the provisioning and payment of the military. The need for ever greater sums of money emerged during the Thirty Years' War, as Spanish armies spread their activities across Europe while continuing their decades-long struggle against the Dutch Republic. Olivares and his supporters were more than willing to offer greater privileges and a relief from religious persecution to the conversos in return for their financial services.<sup>5</sup>

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The kingdom of Naples, which had been since the previous century an important source of revenue for the Spanish monarchy, participated in and to some degree may have even anticipated these changes. The economic expansion of the territory had slowed considerably, at least in part under the burden of increasing taxation from Spain, and the bold experiments in government and ambitious construction projects that had characterized the government of Pedro de Toledo gave way to economic and political stagnation. The viceroys of the last decades of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth faced the difficult task of finding new resources for the overextended Spanish Empire while the economy of southern Italy remained the same, or contracted.<sup>6</sup>

Precisely because of this chaotic financial situation, the Regno in the early 1600s became an attractive territory for mercantile entrepreneurs who were able to find lucrative sources of investment at low cost. The viceroys were willing to abandon their scruples and searched for allies who could provide the necessary funds to stave off a looming financial emergency. By the 1590s, the first Portuguese New Christians began to arrive in Naples. The most visible of these families, which in many ways occupied the role that the Sanchez had played in the previous century, was the Vaaz (or Vaez) family. Three brothers, Miguel, Pantaleão, and Bentão Vaaz arrived in the kingdom sometime around the turn of the century, probably in search of new mercantile opportunities. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the Vaaz had enriched themselves through trade in grain, cochineal, wool, and silk, among other commodities.<sup>7</sup>

Sometime around 1610, Miguel Vaaz entered into the service of the new viceroy, Pedro Fernández de Castro, the Count of Lemos (son-in-law of the Duke of Lerma), who arrived in the city that year. Lemos

employed Vaaz in his reform of the financial administration of the kingdom, an ambitious attempt to organize the chaotic administration of the kingdom's taxation and expenditures, which still operated more or less according to the schemes put in place in the 1530s under Sanchez. A separate treasury, the *Cassa Militare*, was created alongside the existing *Tesoreria Generale*, and given exclusive domain over expenses relating to the viceroy's household, the military expenses of the kingdom, and a select series of large public works that the viceroy wanted to oversee personally. The object was a complete reorganization of state finances that would increase available revenue and render its administration more efficient. Vaaz played a central role in this reform, as the Count of Lemos himself emphasized in a letter to Madrid in which he referred to the Portuguese banker as "the principal instrument of all of my actions" regarding state finance, an able servant who had managed to decipher the contorted records of central and local finances, recuperating large sums of money for the crown and even depriving himself of significant sums of money, a sign of his disinterest and loyalty to the monarchy.<sup>8</sup>

But despite the viceroy's words of praise, his chief financier was not entirely disinterested: Vaaz used his position in the administration of the kingdom to his own advantage, just as the Sanchez and other Iberian *hombres de negocios* before him had. He began to accumulate a significant personal fortune by acquiring an interest in the provision of grain to the capital. In a period when state finances were not a profitable form of investment, grain remained one of the few commodities that could provide consistent returns. Vaaz purchased his own ships to provide grain from far-off markets, including the Levant, to the perennially hungry denizens of the capital, and purchased control over the tax on grain in the provinces. He also gained control of the customs house in Benevento, a papal enclave in the center of the kingdom that served as a key point of transfer for grain arriving from the rich Apulian plains to the capital. Under the protection of Lemos, Vaaz was able to construct a partial monopoly on grain in the kingdom, an enterprise that came with heavy political implications in a period when the population of Naples was growing and the productivity of the kingdom remained stagnant. For the Spanish authorities in this period, maintaining "abundance" in the capital was an imperative for internal stability and public order.<sup>9</sup>

With time, Vaaz acquired a number of enemies within the aristocracy who made a familiar series of accusations: that he had embezzled public funds, that he monopolized the entire market for debt and loans to the state treasury, that he only negotiated with a select group of

bankers who were in business with him, and that he had tricked the unwitting viceroy into believing that his personal investments were in the interest of the state. In 1614, a group of noblemen belonging to the *seggi* of the city, led by Carlo Carafa, presented a formal request to the viceroy to be allowed to make a direct protest at court in Madrid and nominated Geronimo de Guevara, a close associate of Lerma's assistant Rodrigo Calderón, to perform the mission. Vaaz recognized the danger that the delegation represented, and bitterly opposed it both through direct appeals to the viceroy and other Spanish representatives, characterizing Guevara and his supporters as the organizers of nothing less than a plot against the government. Ultimately he appears to have been saved by the viceroy.<sup>10</sup>

Vaaz found himself in a far more precarious situation when Lemos was recalled to Spain and replaced with a new viceroy, Pedro Téllez-Girón, the Duke of Osuna, in 1616. The duke took office with a large contingent of troops and a clear mandate to defend Spanish territory in northern Italy from incursions by the French and the Duke of Savoy. Unlike his predecessor, Osuna regarded the aristocracy of the kingdom and foreign speculators like Vaaz as obstacles to good government, and made his position clear from the beginning of his term. Shortly after arriving in the city he publicly denounced Vaaz for conspiring to prevent him from taking office, signaling to Vaaz's enemies that the banker was no longer to be considered immune from justice, and in the following months a series of accusations were made against him by the representatives of the city. The *seggi* of Porto and Capuana denounced Vaaz for delivering shipments of rotten grain to the city, and in 1617 he fled Naples, narrowly escaping arrest. Nevertheless, he could still count on a significant faction of supporters in the city, who prepared a delegation to Spain to protest the viceroy's actions, and who defended him in his absence. Unable to imprison Vaaz, Osuna retaliated by confiscating all of his property.<sup>11</sup>

Vaaz's fortunes turned when Osuna, heavily contested in Naples after a failed attempt to strengthen the popular representatives of the city against the nobility and accused of *lèse-majesté*, was ordered back to Spain in 1620, a victim of intrigue at court. He died in prison four years later, memorialized by his client Francisco de Quevedo in a famous elegy.<sup>12</sup> The confiscation of Vaaz's property was overturned by his successor, and the banker returned to Naples and his palace in the Borgo di Chiaia the same year. Though Miguel Vaaz lived only four years longer, the wealth that he had accumulated in the previous 20 years and the status he had acquired in the city were more than enough to



assure a continued place for his family in the highest echelons of the kingdom.

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Like other New Christians who arrived in the kingdom before him, Miguel Vaaz viewed the acquisition of landed property and the titles that accompanied it as an essential part of his strategy of investment and social affirmation. In 1597, shortly after his arrival in the kingdom, he purchased Bellosguardo in the province of Principato Citra near Salerno. Though he and his heirs continued to hold on to this property, sometime around the turn of the century he decided to concentrate his patrimonial ambitions in Apulia, in the fertile agricultural plain of the Terra di Bari and in the Salento. By his death in 1623, Miguel Vaaz had established a productive and strategically located feudal estate that served as both an outlet for the wealth that he had accrued in the capital and a base for establishing more stable, if less lucrative, forms of income than his financial activities could permit.

The aggressive methods that Vaaz used to appropriate the feudal rights to the city of Mola di Bari are characteristic of those he employed in his public career. Unlike many towns that came on the market in this period, Mola was not an impoverished agricultural center in the possession of a noble family incapable of meeting expenses. Located along the coast between Bari and Monopoli, the city was home to a thriving port that exchanged goods with cities on both sides of the Adriatic and served as an important outlet for commodities from the interior: grain, oil, almonds and carob. Mola had maintained a long tradition of civic politics and had battled throughout the sixteenth century to liberate itself from the feudal barons that had taken possession of it during the Italian wars. After the La Tolfa family failed to pay off its debts, the city was repossessed by the crown and sold back to the city council, which had gathered enough money to pay for rights which were desired by a number of other wealthy families. In 1584, Philip II issued a privilege to the city which granted it the status of town in the royal domain, subject only to the king and free to tax the citizens and activities in its territory.<sup>13</sup>

Not long after the town had acquired its liberty, Vaaz began to set his sights on Mola. In 1609 he purchased rights to Casamassima, an agricultural center several miles inland, along with rights to the castle and customs house in Mola, and began to acquire influence in the city government through bribes to members of the council. Many of the

citizens attempted to block Vaaz's takeover, holding a meeting in May 1612, but Vaaz's money, together with the pressure he exerted through the governor of the province and a garrison of troops that he invited into the city, finally convinced the members of the council to enfeoff the city to him the following year. For the relatively modest sum of two thousand ducats, Miguel Vaaz was able to purchase full feudal rights to the town and was named Count of Mola by Philip III in 1613. Vaaz installed a number of clients in important positions of government, but the town remained fiercely resistant to his rule. The citizens attempted to sue for the town's return to the royal domain after the Duke of Osuna confiscated Vaaz's property in 1618, and representatives of the city continued to contest the sale and the legitimacy of Vaaz's title well into the eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the heavy tax burden that Vaaz imposed on the city of Mola, he did not rule his territory as an absentee landlord. Instead, consistent with his background, he acted as an entrepreneur, and moved to develop the potential of his landholdings in unorthodox ways. In 1615, sensing the possibilities of the agricultural territory around Casamassima, he undertook the construction of a new settlement at an abandoned fortress near the town and invited a group of some four hundred Dalmatian refugees to inhabit the village and cultivate the land. He used three of his own ships to transport the settlers from Kotor to Barletta, and stipulated an act of foundation with the leaders of the group for a new town to be named Casa Vaaz. The document promised houses and land for all of the settlers, guaranteed them loans of the necessary provisions to survive until they could begin to harvest, and established the tribute to be given to the Count. The settlers were placed under the religious guidance of the archpriest of Casamassima, although their own Greek Orthodox priest, Don Damiano, was allowed to say mass in the village. Ultimately, the religious differences between the settlers and the local population led to the end of Casa Vaaz. When the archpriest of Casamassima discovered in 1618 that the settlers were secretly re-baptizing their children after he had baptized them in the parish, a sign of their false conversion to Catholicism, he alerted the Archbishop of Bari, who in turn informed the Roman curia and the Duke of Osuna. The viceroy ordered that the settlers be immediately expelled from the territory and the village depopulated. The Slavs dispersed, some remaining in small groups in the area, while others returned to Dalmatia. The following year, in contempt of the confiscation of his property, Vaaz re-founded the town under a new name, San Michele, and populated it with local peasants, thus

avoiding a repetition of the problems presented by the first group of settlers.<sup>15</sup>

The spectacle of a New Christian baron presiding over the settlement of a group of Greek Orthodox colonists was unusual, but southern Apulia during this period was nevertheless a zone of relatively open commerce, where a few large feudal proprietors, the Acquaviva d'Aragona and the Carafa, competed for economic and political influence with mercantile entrepreneurs from across the western Mediterranean attracted by the opportunities in the bustling port cities of the Adriatic coast. Merchants from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) had begun to arrive in the region in the fifteenth century, and by the time of Vaaz's arrival had become important landholders and members of the urban elites of the coastal cities. The Ragusan merchant Marino Radulovich became the marchese of Polignano a Mare around the time as the Vaaz took over Mola, and eventually entered into marriage alliances with them, while other Dalmatian families, such as the Resta in Mesagne, took on important roles locally as small landholders and merchants. There was also a class of speculators from the capital, similar to Vaaz in background and ambitions, who asserted themselves during this period. Genoese bankers purchased feudal rights en masse in the Salento during the first decades of the seventeenth century, and Juan Zevallos, a Spaniard who arrived in Naples without any possessions and made an overnight fortune in loans to the royal treasury, took over the heavily indebted city of Ostuni in 1639.<sup>16</sup> Miguel Vaaz and his heirs, with their possessions in Terra di Bari, to which they added San Donato and San Cesario in the Salento, were only one family among a group of entrepreneurial, foreign-born landholders that took over sections of Apulia in the early seventeenth century.

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Miguel Vaaz died childless in 1623 and his property was divided among his nephews. The eldest son of his brother Duarte, Simone Vaaz, inherited Mola and the title of count and took over the leadership of the family and its affairs. The minor possession of Bellosguardo went to Miguel's sister Fiorenza, who brought it as a dowry when she married Giacomo Pignatelli, an unentitled son of one of the kingdom's most illustrious families. The estates of San Donato and San Cesario near Lecce went to Beatrice Vaaz, the daughter of Simone's brother Tommaso. Over time, the division of the family's estates proved to be an effective strategy for dividing the wealth that the first Count of Mola had accumulated

without dissipating the authority that the family had acquired. During the extremely turbulent two decades following Miguel Vaaz's death, when the political and social structures in the kingdom were stressed to the breaking point, the family nevertheless managed to defend its position and preserve its influence in the affairs of the kingdom. While not completely abandoning them, the second generation of the Vaaz moved away from the mercantile and tax-farming activities that had made the family wealthy and toward professions that were consistent with their noble status and political ambitions. Simone Vaaz, the second Count of Mola, was the first member of the family to enter into the legal profession, serving as a civil magistrate and from 1615 as a president of the *Sommaria*, and his sons Michele and Duarte, as well as several of their cousins, were also trained in law. The presence of the Vaaz in the kingdom's tribunals, especially the *Sommaria*, responsible for examining and approving the budgets of local communities and regulating the accounts of the state, gave them an important advantage in their ongoing struggle with the cities under their control.<sup>17</sup>

In the 1620s and 30s, the controversy over the city of Mola intensified as the city took ever-bolder steps to protest the family's administration of the city's affairs while the count repaid them by employing more and more violent officials to keep the city under his control. Finally, in August of 1647, the slow drip of lawsuits and protests gave way to violent struggle, after a popular revolt against Spanish rule, led by the fishmonger Masaniello, erupted in Naples and quickly spread into the provinces. The Vaaz were at the center of the political struggle which led to the revolt – among the demands of the Neapolitan populace to the viceroy in the days prior was that Simone Vaaz reveal the profits he had made on his grain provisions to the city – and from the very beginning, the various branches of the family demonstrated an unfailing loyalty to the Spanish cause, strongly linked to their own. Two of Giorgio Vaaz's sons, the cavalry officer Emanuele and his brother Pantaleone, were among those who accompanied the viceroy, the Duke of Arcos, the object of the Neapolitan populace's wrath, as he fled the city in August 1647. After successfully defending the viceroy as he retreated into the fortress of Sant'Elmo, both died in combat on the outskirts of the city as they escorted him to safety.<sup>18</sup>

In the provinces, the revolt threatened the family even more directly, as cities throughout the kingdom rose up under the banner of a rebellion against the predations of the aristocracy. At the outbreak of the revolt, Simone Vaaz found himself in Foggia, where he was overseeing the customs house, an important royal institution that collected tolls

from shepherds conducting their flocks from Abruzzo to the plains of Apulia. When the viceroy called the barons of the realm to the defense of Spain, Simone sent his sons Michele and Benedetto back to the capital with 60 horses, and took up the task of defending Foggia and his family's estates from the rebellions. In their depositions before the Roman Inquisition in 1660, both Benedetto and Odardo Vaaz recalled how their father had captured and executed the leader of the rebels in Foggia, Matitone Abruzzese, before loading the gold and precious goods in his possession onto carts and sending them to the fortress of Manfredonia on the Adriatic, where he hoped they would be safer than in the unfortified city of Foggia.<sup>19</sup>

The count travelled from Foggia to Manfredonia, and then by sea to Mola, where he encountered an even more formidable revolt against his rule. The citizens of Mola, after decades of attempting to contest their lords through the tribunals, had seized the opportunity of the revolt in the city to rebel against the Vaaz. Under the leadership of the archpriest Angelo Zaccarino, the city reclaimed its independence from the family and abolished a series of taxes and tributes due to the crown and the count. The count's sons Benedetto and Duarte tried and failed to assassinate the archpriest. After the revolt had been suppressed he fled to Naples where he continued to lobby against the Vaaz. At the same time, further south, the Vaaz d'Andrada branch of the family waged an even more pitiless campaign against the rebels in Lecce and in their feudal estates of San Donato and San Cesario. Together with Giovangirolamo II Acquaviva d'Aragona and several other nobles, Michele Vaaz d'Andrada, the Duke of San Donato, led an army of 4,000 men through the Salento. They reconquered Lecce, where rebels had laid waste the duke's palace, and then moved toward San Cesario. The count made an example of this village, whose inhabitants had declared themselves loyal to the city of Lecce during the revolt, and sacked the town in an especially cruel example of aristocratic vengeance.<sup>20</sup>

The arrival of a Spanish fleet under the command of Don Juan of Austria in Naples in 1648, and the subsequent failure of the French navy to provide adequate support to the republican government in the city, led to the end of the experiment in Naples, and a return to the status quo in the provinces. The Vaaz's unflinching political and military support for the monarchy placed them in a position to recuperate their territory and offices. Simone Vaaz returned to his place as President of the Sommaria, and renewed his control over Mola and Casamassima. He died in 1654, having preserved his family's wealth and social status through a period of extreme risk and instability, and his son Duarte,

already a magistrate in the criminal section of the Vicaria, inherited his land and titles. On the eve of the inquisitorial campaign which would come to represent the most significant challenge to the family's position, Duarte Vaaz, his children, and his relatives, had recovered a degree of stability.

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Despite the extraordinary wealth and prestigious offices and titles that the family acquired, the Vaaz remained largely in isolation in Naples. Instead of behaving in the manner of the traditional nobility and seeking marriages with other noble lineages, the Vaaz remained largely separate from their peers. Marriages between the Vaaz and the old noble houses were in fact relatively few, and, as one acute observer within the Neapolitan curia recognized, without too much importance for the family's social status. The Vaaz succeeded in making alliances with untitled members of noble families but were never able to make an alliance with an important lineage that would increase their estates and prestige. Simone Vaaz married one of his daughters into a minor Calabrian dukedom, and secured a marriage between another of his daughters and an unentitled member of the powerful Pignatelli family by endowing him with the feudal property of Roscigno and using his influence at court to have him named duke.<sup>21</sup>

Instead, the Vaaz embarked on a highly idiosyncratic path, arranging a number of marriages among cousins, and requesting and receiving dispensations for these marriages, which were within the degrees of relations prohibited by the church. An alarmed official of the Inquisition in 1658 noted that no less than fourteen marriages between cousins had taken place between the Vaaz since their arrival in Naples. Some of these seem to have been decided according to a clear intention to keep intact the large patrimony that Miguel Vaaz had acquired. The second Count of Mola and head of the Vaaz clan, Simone, married Maiora Vaaz, the daughter of his uncle Benedetto; his son and heir, Duarte, married his first cousin Grazia Vaaz d'Andrada. In both cases, the marriages strengthened ties between two branches of the family that held different parts of the patrimony assembled at the beginning of the century. But in the case of members of the family who lacked the possessions and titles of their relatives, the reasons are less obvious. Benedetto, the son of Simone's dissolute and down-at-heel cousin Giorgio, spent most of his early adulthood divided between periods of idleness in Naples and military commissions which took him across Italy and Spain. When he



decided to marry, at age 32, he chose his first cousin Beatrice, which he later described as a love match that his father (himself married to a cousin) had bitterly opposed and which provoked a long-standing feud between the two. Benedetto received a papal dispensation for the marriage. Grazia Vaaz, the daughter of Simone Vaaz's brother Tommaso, married a relative, Giovanni Mendes, and when he died married another relative, Duarte di Rivera, who had himself been previously married to one of Grazia's cousins.<sup>22</sup> Antonio Suarez Coronel, related to the Vaaz through his mother, left Portugal at the age of fifteen and came to Naples by way of Genoa and Milan. Simone Vaaz invited him into his household, put him to work as an accountant for his estates, and married him to his niece Isabella.<sup>23</sup>

The reasons for the frequency of intermarriage in this large clan are not obvious. Certainly there were reasons that kept the Vaaz from interacting more closely with the local nobility, not least of which was the resentment that the older families bore towards them. The relationship of the Vaaz with the Acquaviva d'Aragona family, the Counts of Conversano, who were their neighbors in Terra di Bari and the Salento is emblematic of this divide. Despite their collaboration during the combat against the local rebellions that accompanied the revolt of 1647 and the declaration of the Neapolitan republic, the two families were never close, and their positions in the kingdom placed them in competition. In a brief that Duarte Vaaz and his brothers issued in their defense during the inquisitorial trial against them in 1658, they described the Count of Conversano as an enemy of the family, with whom they had been in conflict for many years over offices in Naples as well as territory, including castles, that lay on the borders of their respective estates in Apulia. In later testimony, Benedetto accused the count of supporting the archpriest of Mola and the city in their attempts to undermine the Vaaz, in the interest of eventually taking over the city himself. Though they would find themselves allied once again during the course of the inquisitorial trials, the two families fundamentally mistrusted one another.<sup>24</sup>

Undoubtedly, a complex of social prejudices and political differences played a role in this differentiation. Giovangirolamo d'Acquaviva, the Count of Conversano, was among the chief defenders of the privileges and status of the old aristocracy against the incursions of new men and the attempts of the viceroys to limit its political influence. Acquaviva viewed Miguel Vaaz and those like him as unworthy of their titles and as a threat to the status of the traditional nobility. In 1640, he organized a meeting of aristocrats in the church of San Lorenzo in

Naples to prevent a planned marriage between the fabulously wealthy and bitterly despised merchant-speculator who dominated state finances in the 1630s and 40s, Bartolomeo d'Aquino, and his own sister, Anna Acquaviva. The marriage had been devised by d'Aquino, who viewed it as a path to social ascent, and the viceroy, who considered it an opportunity to strengthen the position of his ally d'Aquino at the expense of the Acquaviva and the old nobility. The count moved his sister from the monastery where she was staying to a palace from which she was kidnapped, in open defiance of the viceroy, by a large group of armed, mounted noblemen, who brought her to the safety of a convent far from the city.<sup>25</sup> It was natural that the count and his family would have viewed the Vaaz, who had enriched themselves in exactly the same way that d'Aquino had, as a similarly ignoble lineage.

The conflict between new rich financiers and old nobility was a symptom of the social and economic crisis that the kingdom was experiencing during these years, and the Vaaz were only one of many newly wealthy families to find that overnight riches were inevitably accompanied by the resentment of old families of the kingdom, who could only view the newcomers' success as having come at their expense. While some families managed to assimilate through strategically planned marriages and careful attention to their public image, the distinction between the old nobility "of arms" and the new rich was destined to remain. In the case of the Vaaz, the family's foreign, converso origin, to the extent that it was common knowledge, was yet another factor of social difference: one which was rarely publicly raised before the trials against them began, but probably played a role in their lives. On the one hand, it is easy to imagine that the family's New Christian lineage made them pariahs in the eyes of some families who might have otherwise been attracted to its wealth. At the same time, it is possible that the Vaaz themselves may have harbored a degree of ethnic or religious prejudice that led them to avoid close relationships with anyone outside of their circle, or who did not share their Portuguese and Sephardic origins. As at least one witness at the trial in 1660 alleged, the marriages among relatives were a way of preserving the trust necessary to sustain the practice of crypto-Judaism.

Among the more frequent contacts of the Vaaz were men like themselves: merchants, often Sephardic Jews and New Christians, who operated in complex trade networks across the globe. Antonio Suarez Coronel recalled before the Roman Inquisition the many contacts that he had made trading in all kinds of commodities, from oil and grain produced on the Vaaz estates, to chocolate, sugar, and pepper: Livorno was

his most frequent port of exchange, the place where goods entered Italy from Lisbon and across the Portuguese Empire. He was in contact there with merchants who used pseudonyms, like Diego Romero alias Luigi de Lemos, Emanuel Crispino, and Pedro de Silva. In Venice he dealt with another Portuguese merchant, the Marquis Fonseca; in Genoa with the Balbi; in Messina with a Fleming, Ettore Vanach Hoven, and Simone Foti.<sup>26</sup> Though the family's business contacts in the peninsula are evident, it is unclear what the family's relationship with the wider network of Sephardic merchant families spread across the Portuguese and Spanish maritime empires might have been.

This, at mid-century, was the profile of a feudal dynasty that had built its wealth and power on the construction and defense of commercial and financial monopolies, in a manner far more extensive and on a greater scale than the Aragonese Sanchez that had preceded them. More aggressive in the construction of a landed patrimony, and less interested in alliances with the old nobility, which he probably recognized as in economic decline, Miguel Vaaz laid down a solid base on which his family could continue to build in the following decades. While Sirago has described the family as weakened, and "easy game" for inquisitors, the vigorous legal and political battle that they waged against the Holy Office in the 1650s demonstrates the opposite.<sup>27</sup>

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While the Portuguese New Christians in Naples, like their Aragonese predecessors, generally kept a low profile and avoided demonstrations of group solidarity or self-identification, by the mid-seventeenth century they had become the objects of attention of influential observers of Neapolitan society, in particular lawyers and literate professionals who delighted in slandering the city's aristocracy for entertainment, and who set their sights on these and other arriviste noblemen whose pretensions outmatched their lineage. In texts such as Domenico Confuorto's *News of Some Popular Families of the City of Naples who Have Become Notable for their Wealth and Nobility*, and *Various Events that Have Happened to Neapolitans*, written under the pseudonyms of Ascanio and Silvio Corona, all of the seedy misdeeds and moral failings of the Neapolitan aristocracy were publicized to a local and Italian audience in a form of early journalism that also carried an implicit message of social criticism. These chroniclers particularly delighted in recounting the stories of unwitting cuckolds and jealous husbands, but they also indulged their readers with exposures of the low origins of the families who pompously

marched around the city displaying their 'signs of distinction' and filled its streets with imposing and austere palaces.<sup>28</sup>

Not surprisingly, Portuguese New Christian families were attractive targets for these authors. Though the Vaaz were the most visible members of the Portuguese nation living in Naples, there were other mercantile families who followed a similar path to wealth and status during the same period. Alfonso Vargas arrived in the city at the turn of the century, and was named a judge in the Vicaria in 1602 and served there until he entered the Council of Santa Chiara in 1612. Later chroniclers attributed his wealth less to his political skill than to a fortunate marriage – his wife Zenobia Nave, from a Milanese family that had migrated to Southern Italy, brought him a considerable dowry that included two small but productive estates in northern Apulia, Carpino and Cagnano. Vargas became Duke of Cagnano, a title he passed to his son Francesco, while another son became an abbot. His illegitimate grandson Luigi followed him into a legal career, joining the Vicaria as a judge in 1636. The Duke of Cagnano and his family seem to have been accepted into the Neapolitan aristocracy and visible at court: two of his sons performed roles in a comedy put on by members of the nobility for the viceroy in 1630. It is unclear what the nature of the family's relationship with the Vaaz was; while both were active in the city's tribunals, they do not seem to have been especially close to one another, and members of both families accused the others of crypto-Judaism during the 1650s.<sup>29</sup>

Luis Freitas Pinto, a member of a converso family that had already established a potent commercial network stretching from India to the New World, arrived in Naples during the same period "with his fattened riches," just as other members of his family were about to begin participating in the *asientos*. Freitas Pinto never appears to have sought administrative or judicial office, preferring to manage his affairs privately. The chronicler Domenico Confuorto recalled meeting him, and described the family as "Portuguese in origin, belonging to the popular class, and in the opinion of some, of Jewish origin, a sect which has been very fertile in this kingdom, as we have seen many families who in public showed themselves to be Catholics, while in secret they observed the Jewish rite..." In Confuorto's view, Luis Freitas Pinto had lived relatively modestly despite his wealth, though he pitilessly depicted Luis's sons, Gaspar and Emmanuele, as social climbers who used their family's wealth to acquire status within the urban aristocracy. After cultivating members of the urban aristocracy from an early age, they married two attractive noblewomen who could boast membership in the *seggi* but came from largely impoverished families, Angela Lagni and Girolama

Capece Bozzuto. After the marriage, Emanuele purchased the feudal estate of Ischitella, on the Gargano peninsula, obtaining the title of Prince; shortly thereafter he was admitted into the military order of Calatrava. Gaspar took on the office of treasurer-general of the kingdom of Naples, the last of a series of conversos to occupy the post.<sup>30</sup>

Confuorto pulled no punches in his account of the Pinto family's attempts to disguise its ignoble past. In particular he indulged the reader in a lengthy description of the embarrassment caused by Luis Freitas Pinto's tomb, which contained a series of false genealogies and invented titles. Particularly egregious in his view was the sons' placement of the arms of the order of Alcantara on their father's tomb in the church of Santo Spirito, despite the fact that he had never been a member. After the order protested, embarrassing the two sons, they removed the arms and replaced them with those of the Portuguese order of Avis, of which Freitas Pinto had been a member, despite the blood purity statute which would have prevented New Christians from joining. Confuorto's sentence was pitiless: "Everyone knows, even those of mediocre and little understanding, that these specious and magnificent inscriptions, full of vain lies, are made in order to deceive the ignorant and convince them of the existence of that which never was." But despite these embarrassing missteps, the family's wealth continued to assure them a visible place in Neapolitan society, and both Gaspar and Emanuele's sons continued to occupy important offices, including in the Vicaria. And despite the insinuations that Confuorto, and no doubt many others, made about their religious habits, they managed to completely avoid any investigation by the Holy Office. The last of the Pinto Princes of Ischitella, a minister to the Bourbon king Ferdinand II, helped to organize an army to defend the Kingdom of Two Sicilies from Garibaldi's troops in 1861 before dying as an exile in Paris.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to the three families – Vaaz, Vargas, and Pinto – who established a permanent presence in the Kingdom of Naples during the period, there was at least one other family of *asentista*<sup>32</sup> financiers that operated in the city without ever settling there permanently. The Cortizos, Portuguese conversos who had migrated from Braganza to Madrid after the union of the monarchies, carved out a considerable share of exports of wool, one of Spain's major commodities. Sebastián Cortizos established a trading operation in Naples in the 1630s, while his brother Manuel directed the various branches of the business from Madrid. After his family had almost single-handedly financed the military suppression of the Catalan revolt in 1647, Sebastián substituted his deceased brother as the head of the family in 1650 and continued

to receive honors and important offices from the crown, despite an inquisitorial investigation of his family which ended without any convictions. In 1657 he returned to Italy as the Spanish ambassador to Genoa, a natural role for a major financier in what remained an important banking center. During the same year, Cortizos' brother-in-law, Sebastião Lopez Hierro de Castro, a member of the *Consejo de Estado*, was named President of the Camera della Sommaria, the same office that Simone Vaaz had held three years prior. He also acquired the feudal estate of Castelforte, and the title of marchese. Lopez de Hierro died in 1667, and Cortizos moved to Naples the following year, continuing to manage the firm's affairs from there until his death in 1672. Though Sebastião's son Manuel Jose continued to do business in Naples, he transferred the family's operations back to Spain, while Lopez Hierro's family moved to Rome.<sup>33</sup>

The relationships of these families with one another, and above all with the Vaaz, are unclear. The close collaboration that existed between the members of the Aragonese New Christian community working in the royal treasury in the sixteenth century does not seem to have existed in the case of the Portuguese, although members of all of these families found themselves working alongside one another in the city's tribunals of justice and financial offices.

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The Portuguese in Naples, to an even greater extent than their Catalan predecessors, were creatures of the viceregal court who operated largely without points of reference in local society, and their participation in the cultural and intellectual life of seventeenth-century Naples largely reflects their essentially Iberian and courtly tastes. Lopez Hierro wrote poetry in Castilian and collaborated with Juan Caramuel, a Spanish philosopher, theologian, and mathematician resident in Naples in the 1650s who dedicated one of his works, the *Metamétrica*, to Hierro in 1652. Both he and Cortizos were also involved in the purchases of artwork from the former collection of Charles I of England by the Spanish crown in the 1650s, a massive financial and diplomatic maneuver which John Elliott and Jonathan Brown have called the "sale of the century."<sup>34</sup>

The poet Miguel de Silveira (ca. 1580–1639), born in Celorico da Beira at the end of the sixteenth century, became an even more formidable literary presence at the Neapolitan court. After serving at the court in Madrid, where he became friends with Isaac Cardoso, he traveled to Naples in the company of the viceroy Ramirez Nuñez de Guzmán, the



Duke of Medinas de las Torres, perhaps fearing an inquisitorial trial after several of his friends and relatives had come under investigation. Silveira established himself in the Neapolitan court as a teacher of mathematics, law and medicine, but he gained his greatest fame as a poet, publishing three epic poems there, heavily influenced by the style and example of Luis de Camoes' *Lusiadas*. Of these three, *El Macabeo*, a poetic retelling of the Maccabean revolt, published by the royal printer Egidio Longo and dedicated to the viceroy, is of special interest for its subject's obvious affinity with Jewish apologetics. In a vast poem filled with illustrations and encomia to the Kings of Spain and Portugal, his patron's family, and the aristocracy, Silveira retells the story of the Macabee revolt, culminating in the restoration of the Temple. It is easy to see the crypto-Jewish subtext in the poem, but it nevertheless received the full approval of ecclesiastical authorities, including the minister of the Inquisition, and it does not appear that Silveira was ever accused of marranism during his years in Naples.<sup>35</sup> After Silveira's death, he was replaced as court physician by Luis Enriquez de Fonseca, who became a professor of medicine at the University of Naples. Fonseca published treatises on tumors and gout while at Naples, the latter of which contained a description of Sebastian Cortizos' death in Naples at the hands of an ill-prepared doctor.<sup>36</sup>



The rise of the Portuguese in Naples presents a number of striking analogies with that of their Aragonese predecessors in the sixteenth century. They demonstrated the same ability to form strategic alliances with the Spanish viceroys, beginning with the Count of Lemos, and pursued their ambitions entirely in the shadow of the court. They could count on a Spanish administration experiencing almost continuous financial emergency, which was willing to offer them large concessions, privileges, and liberty of action in return for access to their capital. Though momentary disputes could briefly undermine this relationship, as in the case of Vaaz's conflict with the Duke of Osuna, it was ultimately sustained by overarching accords between the Spanish crown and the Portuguese New Christians that usually ensured their survival in Naples during even the most virulent moments of political crisis.

This collaboration also provided the Portuguese New Christians with fairly reliable insulation from the perennial social struggles in the kingdom, and, as the following chapter demonstrates, from the looming threat of inquisitorial persecution. The native aristocracy, even more entrenched in its rejection of foreign rivals than it had been in the

previous century, kept the New Christians at a distance, refusing them entry into the *seggi*, an honor extended to the families of several viceroys, and rarely considered them suitable partners for their daughters and sons. But like the Sanchez, Villagut, and Beltran in the previous century, the Portuguese made an aggressive and largely successful bid for aristocratic status and privileges, purchasing estates in almost every province of the kingdom and acquiring the titles that came with them. Perhaps to a greater extent than the Aragonese, they also made an attempt to acquire status through the military service that conservative aristocrats considered the only true path to nobility. And despite the sarcasm of critics like Confuorto and the Corona, they were equally successful at acquiring membership in the prestigious military orders that constituted the main forum for affirmation among the Spanish and Portuguese aristocracies.

Furthermore, to an even greater extent than in the previous century, the presence of the converso élite in Naples was sustained by agreements and political alliances negotiated beyond the kingdom's borders. The agreements on which their presence was established were formulated in the court at Madrid and in the correspondence of trading partners and relatives spread across the globe, who provided the influence to keep the Vaaz, Pinto, and Vargas in their positions. The Portuguese experience demonstrates that Naples remained a dynamic periphery of the Spanish Empire, a city that formed an essential part of the strategies of *asentistas* and royal ministers alike.

# 5

## The Inquisition against the Vaaz

From the moment Miguel Vaaz established himself in Naples, the officials of the Inquisition took a quiet but persistent interest in him and his family, collecting evidence and testimony, waiting for the right moment to open an investigation of a figure who was both celebrated and derided for his ostentation and arrogance, and whose meteoric rise had generated a panoply of legends and rumors, among them the suggestion that he was a crypto-Jew. It is a testament both to the authority and pure tactical ability of the Count of Mola and his descendants, as well as to the persistence and long memory of the Inquisition, that over forty years separate the first investigations of the family from the arrest and trial of Duarte Vaaz in 1657. The time in between was filled with false starts, blocked proceedings, and desperate maneuvers by both sides, all part of a simmering conflict between a powerful family whose existence in the city was seen as an affront to religious orthodoxy and a Holy Office determined not to concede any ground to the reasons of political convenience or economic interest.

This struggle, which involved an array of actors from within the ranks of church and state, both in Rome and Naples, was further complicated by the existence of two separate tribunals of the Inquisition in Naples. In 1585, dissatisfied with the autonomy and uneven record of the episcopal court, the Congregation of the Holy Office created a second tribunal of the Holy Office, headed by a minister of the Holy Office obedient to Rome. A series of handpicked representatives of the Congregation took on an important role in investigation of crimes against the faith. Though their resources were smaller and their collaborators fewer, the single-minded dedication of the ministers and their close connections to the cardinal inquisitors made them important protagonists in the anti-heretical activity of the Neapolitan church. Their relations

with the older Episcopal tribunal were rocky and sometimes openly hostile; the minister and archbishop were in competition not only for jurisdiction, but also precedence within the ecclesiastical hierarchy and in the urban élite.<sup>1</sup>

Both the *curia* and the ministers, acting on separate denunciations and following different lines of evidence, opened investigations against the Vaaz, and while they quickly uncovered significant evidence, their investigations were impeded by various circumstances. Some of these were unquestionably related to the family's influence and others due to the disorganization of the tribunals, while more than once it was the rising social and political unrest in the city that interrupted an investigation that was proceeding rapidly forward. Ultimately, it was the minister of the Inquisition, Camillo Piazza, who led the final contest with the Vaaz, in collaboration with the bishops of Lecce and Bari, and under the strict supervision of the cardinals of the Congregation of the Holy Office. The Vaaz, much like the generation of Aragonese conversos that preceded them by a century, stood at the intersection of a series of power relationships that sustained the Spanish regime in Naples, and prosecuting them was a risky undertaking that required close collaboration with the state and careful sense of timing.

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The Vaaz attracted the attention of the Holy Office for the first time in 1616, when three noblewomen denounced the Count of Mola to the archbishop, claiming that they had been told by a washerwoman employed in the Count's household that the entire family lived as Jews, paying scarce attention to basic precepts of Christian life such as the Friday fast, and observing Saturday as a day of rest. The court called other servants from the household to testify, all of whom confirmed the initial accusations against the family. More than one witness claimed that they never ate pork, while another recalled that they would gather to read from a mysterious book, and that every year in August or September they would dress 'pompously' and place their youngest child in the center of a room, worshipping him as their God. Though the clues regarding the family matched a classic pattern of marranism, and the evidence was more or less the same as that which had been used to implicate judaizers in the past, the court abandoned the investigation before interrogating Miguel Vaaz or any other member of his family. As it turned out, the investigation was put on hold from Rome, where the cardinal inquisitors,

aware of the political protection that Vaaz enjoyed, ordered that the trial be suspended until a new viceroy was chosen, hopefully one less inclined to protect the banker. The course of events rapidly overtook the investigation, and the viceroy Osuna's attempts to ruin Vaaz, followed by Vaaz's flight from the city, prevented any further inquiries by the Holy Office. When, in 1626, the tribunal received new information regarding Miguel Vaaz from Fiorenza Teixeira, a Portuguese New Christian who had confessed to apostasy to the Holy Office in Milan, the count had already died, interred in the pavement of a church that he had entirely rebuilt and decorated, the *Ascensione a Chiaia*.<sup>2</sup>

Another ten years passed before the question of crypto-Judaism again captured the attention of ecclesiastical authorities: in January of 1636, a sheet reading "Long live the law of Moses, for we don't recognize the law of Christ" was discovered outside an Augustinian convent in Naples. This extremely provocative act, a *marrano* "*affaire des placards*" without precedent in Italy, raised the alarm for judaizers in both Naples and Rome.<sup>3</sup> Though its author was never discovered, it indirectly led to the collection of new evidence against the Vaaz, including the testimony of a former servant. The same year, news arrived from Cremona that a nephew of Miguel Vaaz had openly confessed to Judaism. After being mortally wounded in a duel, he announced to witnesses that he had been born a Jew, that his real name was David, and asked to be buried in a Jewish ceremony. His body was taken to Mantua, where it was interred by relatives, and the scandal of his apostasy quickly reached Naples by word of mouth. Unlike the rest of the evidence against the family, which had been collected in secret by the Holy Office, the story became well-known, was included in local chronicles, and did much to consolidate the Neapolitan populace's identification of the Vaaz as *marranos*.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, despite the accumulation of evidence, it took another decade before inquisitors returned to the family. In late 1646, Carlo Chirico sent a letter from Lecce to the minister of the Holy Office in Naples denouncing the crypto-Judaism of Miguel Vaaz's nephew Miguel Vaaz d'Andrada, the Duke of San Donato. He claimed that the duke, along with his family and those of three relatives living in the area were assiduous observers of Jewish ritual and owners of a collection of prohibited books. Once again, the Congregation of the Holy Office was eager to investigate, and instructed the bishop of Lecce to interrogate Chirico. However, he changed his story twice under questioning and ended by distancing himself from the accusations contained in his letter, claiming that he did not know these facts personally, but had merely reported them on

behalf of an enemy of the Vaaz. His testimony quickly evaporated, and the bishop wrote an irritated letter to Rome in which he suggested ignoring the testimony of an unreliable witness, who was "not too bright and a bit rough around the edges."<sup>5</sup>

The following year, another denunciation, by a servant of Beatrice, the wife of Benedetto di Giorgio Vaaz, arrived in the archepiscopal court in Naples. Though he was investigating in the immediate aftermath of the revolution and the Spanish reconquest of the city, archbishop Filomarino nevertheless moved ahead with the investigation, and managed to collect corroborating testimony from other servants. He wrote to the cardinal inquisitors that the investigation faced a number of obstacles: Emanuele Vaaz, the baron of Campo Marino, had left Naples for his estate, where he was more or less safe from prosecution in a territory that was still facing unrest from the revolts and filled with outlaws, and while the archbishop continued to investigate in the capital, he made only incremental progress, reporting in June of 1648 that the Vaaz were aware of the attention focused on them and were acting "with great circumspection and just as much secrecy."<sup>6</sup> Another seven years passed before any new information arrived in either tribunal of the Holy Office in Naples regarding this numerous and powerful clan, but by that time they were unable to prevent the opening of a series of trials against almost every adult member of the family in Naples and Lecce.

The decisive testimony came in June of 1655 from a young Neapolitan aristocrat named Cesare di Roberto who had recently married Isabella Sousa, the daughter of Miguel Vaaz's niece Anna and Benedetto Sousa, a Portuguese merchant active in Naples. Di Roberto was reluctant to denounce members of his own family, and came to the minister of the Inquisition only at the persuasion of his confessor, a member of the Theatine order. His wife had revealed to him frankly and early on that while her father was an old Christian and a good Catholic, her mother had been born into a family of New Christians. Though she had been baptized in San Cesario, a town outside of Lecce that formed part of the estate of the Duke of San Donato, she had lived her entire life in observance of the Mosaic Law, and had only begun to abandon it in favor of Christianity over the previous year. Di Roberto accompanied his recollections with a long list of names that included most of the Vaaz family, as well as their relatives and other Portuguese immigrants living in Naples. The cardinal inquisitors quickly recognized an authoritative witness who had provided an exhaustive list of suspects. Combined with the knowledge of the family that the Holy Office had already accumulated, the potential for a large scale campaign



against the group of New Christians was clear, and after receiving the approval of the pope, the Congregation of the Holy Office ordered the minister, Felice Tamburelli, to proceed with an interrogation of Isabella Sousa.<sup>7</sup>

In 1656 an outbreak of plague hit the kingdom of Naples, striking particularly hard in the capital, where infection spread quickly in the densely populated neighborhoods of the city. Though accurate statistics are impossible to recover, the most recent estimates suggest that nearly half of the city's population, some 200,000 individuals, died during the pestilence, leaving the city uninhabited in large sections and sending its population into a demographic spiral from which it was not to recover until the end of the century.<sup>8</sup> It was an event capable of unsettling long standing political and economic structures, and its effects were inevitably felt in the context of the Vaaz investigation as well. Among the victims of the epidemic was Tamburelli, a loss which put the activity of the Holy Office on hold for almost a year. However, the epidemic was equally or even more devastating for the Vaaz, killing some ten members of the family, including the Count's pregnant wife Grazia, his sister Maria, and her daughters. Benedetto di Giorgio lost two children and his brother Emanuele Duarte. Two of Tommaso Vaaz's sons, Duarte and Emanuele, as well as Fiorenza Vaaz d'Andrada, the daughter of the second duke of San Donato, also fell victim. In their testimony before the Roman Inquisition in 1660, both Duarte and Benedetto di Giorgio Vaaz recalled the frantic struggle to survive during the months of the plague. Both men left their homes for a rented house near the church of San Carlo alle Mortelle, in the Spanish Quarter, but were forced to abandon it after the area was overtaken by the epidemic. Though they survived, both fell ill, and the Count was placed under quarantine by the viceroy even after he recovered.<sup>9</sup>

The bonds of secrecy and familial solidarity that had held the Vaaz together in the past frayed during the plague. The Count of Mola found himself short of cash, unable to meet his family's requests for money, and his already fragile relationship with his cousins, the children of Giorgio Vaaz, was pushed to the breaking point. After Giorgio's daughter Fiorenza took ill, one of the family's servants called a barber to cure her; when he managed to save her life, she fell in love with him, and against the will of her brother Benedetto and the Count, the couple decided to marry. The outraged count refused to grant her the dowry that had been promised to her, claiming that she had brought dishonor on the family. Though Fiorenza's love life had provoked the anger of her male relatives in the past, the dispute over the marriage was to prove far more

destructive than any of their previous disagreements. As the plague dissipated and the city emerged from what the archbishop described as the "horrible spectacle of death," this bitter dispute led the family back into the courts of the Inquisition. On July 17, 1657, Fiorenza Vaaz testified that not only had her cousin practiced Judaism, so had her brother Benedetto and her parents Giorgio and Grazia Vaaz.<sup>10</sup> The nunzio Giulio Spinola, who took charge of the tribunal following Tamburelli's death, informed the cardinals of this development a few days later, and they responded with detailed instructions, expressing disappointment that the family had managed to escape from the tribunal's grasp on so many occasions, and insisting that this time the Holy Office should use a "strong hand" against the apostates.<sup>11</sup>

The confession by Fiorenza Vaaz, a close relative of Duarte Vaaz, who had provided very damaging testimony, forced the Count of Mola to recognize the seriousness of the situation that was taking shape around him, and he took a number of steps to prevent the court from continuing its investigation. He issued a series of briefs directed to the curia that refuted the accusations against him and depicted his accusers as enemies who were deceitfully using the court to pursue private vengeance. Fiorenza Vaaz, "a frivolous woman despite the fact that she is more than fifty years old", had married Francesco Antonio Campagna several years prior, after the barber had cured her during the plague, and the count and her brother Benedetto, opposed to the marriage, had refused to provide her with a dowry. Her brother Michele Vaaz, also in conflict with the count, had attempted to marry a prostitute and had also been prevented from doing so. As a result, the two siblings decided to "mount a grand scheme" to ruin their brother, the count, and his brother, who were momentarily out of the good graces of the viceroy and therefore vulnerable to the Inquisition. The document listed all of the witnesses whom Fiorenza and Michele had paid or promised payment in exchange for testimony against the count. The catalogue included a professional perjurer, Domenico Grasso, who had been twice convicted in the past for false testimony and for forging a will, and a collection of disgruntled former servants and enemies of the family. In another brief, Duarte Vaaz suggested the presence of an even more extensive group of participants in the plot, including his feudal rivals, the Counts of Conversano, and the city of Mola, which had restarted its legal battle against the Vaaz.<sup>12</sup>

But when these legal means of defense proved insufficient, the count was not above resorting to more underhanded tactics. The nunzio reported that Girolamo Carmignano, the count's brother in law, had

corrupted or attempted to corrupt several officials of the episcopal curia, making it difficult to find records of the family in the court's archives. When this failed to stop the investigation, Vaaz resorted to his final, most desperate tactic – placing himself in the midst of a state criminal investigation that would take precedence over the inquisitorial action. Neapolitans had long been experts at taking advantage of jurisdictional conflicts for their own gain, but Vaaz, a high ranking judge, knew the workings of the justice system better than most and had all of the necessary tools to buy himself time and attempt to exhaust the energies of the Inquisition yet again. In July of 1658, the count was imprisoned in Castel Sant'Elmo on the order of the viceroy, suspected of having manipulated a criminal proceeding in his court in favor of the accused. The officials of the Inquisition were taken by surprise: a key suspect who had eluded them for years had escaped their grasp through a technicality.<sup>13</sup>

The nunzio reacted immediately, seeking the intervention of the viceroy, the Count of Castrillo. He insisted on the gravity of the accusations against Vaaz and the importance of the viceroy's assistance in bringing him to trial. The viceroy, unlike his predecessors, declared himself willing to aid the investigation in any way possible. He made no objections to the accusations against the family, declaring that their crypto-Judaism was well-known in Spain. He recalled how in the past other viceroys had opposed granting certain offices to the count because of his Judaism, and expressed satisfaction at having imprisoned him. He even claimed that he had received "unusual and supernatural" intuitions that Vaaz was guilty of *laesa maestas divina* and that he was disloyal to the crown.<sup>14</sup> Yet despite the intentions of the viceroy, he was to prove less resolute than the nunzio may have hoped. In a meeting the following week, he gave voice to his concerns: despite the undeniably well founded accusations against the count, he was nevertheless a relative of many important families, and, recalling the revolt of 1547, the viceroy reminded the nunzio what a sensitive issue the Holy Office was for the city of Naples. The nunzio was unable to persuade him otherwise, and Vaaz was kept in the prisons of the state, for the moment out of reach.<sup>15</sup> The officials of the Inquisition continued to insist that the Vaaz's relationships were only with minor branches of the city's aristocracy, not its leading members, and minimized the risk of civic unrest or revolt. They were far more concerned about the shifting political equilibrium, and after recognizing an ally in the Count of Castrillo, attempted to finish the trial before his term was over.<sup>16</sup>

The Count of Peñaranda, nominated viceroy in December 1658, was far less willing to believe the version of facts that the officials of the curia and the nunzio presented to him. He defended the honor of the Vaaz as a “highly qualified” family, related to many of the most important families in the city, including that of the Duke of Monteleone, the viceroy of Aragon. He also claimed that Fiorenza Vaaz and Giulio Antonio Campagna had accused her relatives in order to blackmail them, just as the count and his brother had alleged. He told the nunzio that the entire trial was a fabrication, and that he opposed Fiorenza’s attempts to recuperate her dowry.<sup>17</sup> Though the nunzio feared that the case against the count would collapse, the viceroy eventually changed his mind, and agreed to hand the count over to the Holy Office, along with his brother. The Congregation of the Holy Office, not wanting to take further risks, immediately extradited the two brothers, along with their cousin Benedetto di Giorgio Vaaz and Antonio Suarez Coronel, to the Roman prisons of the Holy Office, where they arrived in September 1659.

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With Duarte Vaaz finally in the custody of the Inquisition, the investigation began in earnest. The group of prisoners assembled in Rome had been brought there in order to remove the possibility of interference by the prisoners themselves – the Count had proven capable of creating diversions even from prison – and by the viceroy and civil authorities in Naples, who had proven unreliable partners for the Holy Office in a complicated and politically charged trial. They represented the leaders of the family, not only the Count of Mola and his brother, but also Antonio Suarez Coronel, a merchant who had married into the family and was responsible for the commercial activities that had first brought them to wealth. The Roman phase of the trial is particularly well documented, and the trial transcripts reveal an intense tactical battle between the suspects and the inquisitors which lasted about six months, and culminated in the full confessions of all six suspects in March of 1660.

The suspects were interrogated about their entire lives, and they responded with detailed and largely accurate accounts of their family’s history that flesh out the portraits of the family available in other records. Giorgio Vaaz, the brother of the count Simone, appears as an embittered rival who opened civil litigation against his own brother for their uncle’s inheritance; he was also a cruel father who disinherited

his children, leaving one, as one official of the Inquisition recounted it, to earn a living as a manual laborer, carrying packages and furniture in via Toledo. They also revealed to the inquisitors other strange and unseemly details, such as the many marriages between close relatives that had occurred throughout the period the family lived in Naples, as well as the dishonor that Fiorenza had brought upon the house through her frequent love affairs and the violence to which her brothers and cousins had subjected her in order to prevent her from stepping further out of line.

But throughout the first months of the interrogations, they refused to make any confession that they had ever known "any blasphemers, bigamists, or crypto-Jews."<sup>18</sup> They gave expansive accounts of their religious habits, which they insisted were entirely orthodox. Each of the suspects described a solid religious education at the hands of teachers from the religious orders, followed by scrupulous observance of Catholic rituals and participation in the sacraments in adulthood. Antonio Suarez Coronel recounted how he had brought a Latin priest to Campo Marino, a remote estate of the family where he took refuge during the revolution, because he "was not entirely satisfied with the way of celebrating [the mass]" in this remote corner of the peninsula, which had been settled by Albanians who had crossed the Adriatic and continued to practice the Greek rite.<sup>19</sup>

Ultimately, the subject which did most to undermine the confidence of the Vaaz was an old episode that had already captured the attention of the Holy Office: the deathbed conversion of Miguel Vaaz Suarez, the young infantry captain who had openly confessed to Judaism after being wounded in a duel in 1636. Witnesses recounted how Neapolitans repeated the story whenever they spoke about the family, and the Inquisition possessed solid, documented evidence of the event that was hard to ignore or explain away. After receiving impassioned denials of any involvement in or knowledge of crypto-Judaism from every suspect in Rome, the inquisitors began to focus their questioning on this specific incident. On March 5, Duarte Vaaz was evasive: he told the court that he vaguely remembered this Spanish cousin, but that the events were a distant memory, from the time of his great uncle Miguel. Asked again the following day, he recalled that he had died in Milan, and claimed to know nothing of his deathbed conversion.<sup>20</sup>

On March 20, however, Antonio Suarez Coronel requested to speak to the inquisitors. He was brought from his prison cell and immediately began to confess. He revealed that he had served in the infantry company commanded by Miguel Vaaz Suarez, and described how Vaaz

Suarez had attempted to persuade him to abandon Christianity and follow the Jewish law, just as Count Miguel Vaaz and the rest of the family did. Though Suarez Coronel initially attempted to resist these attempts at conversion, and even resigned his post in the infantry, the family isolated him and controlled his movements until Alvaro Vaaz, a member of the San Donato branch of the family, persuaded him to follow the law of Moses, and begin to fast and observe the sabbath. According to Suarez Coronel, the high levels of intermarriage between the various branches of the Vaaz family were meant to preserve the pact of silence between them and prevent the introduction of outsiders; in his opinion every member of the family was a "Jew," including the count.<sup>21</sup>

Suarez Coronel's confession finally broke the silence and left the remaining suspects with no alternative than to follow his example. Far from their power base in Naples, and devoid of any possibilities for legal recourse or mediation in Rome, where the decisions of the Holy Office were final and without appeal, the both the Count and his brother Benedetto confessed the following day. Begging the mercy of the court and claiming that he had lied only to defend his family's reputation, he confessed that his father had persuaded him that only the Jewish law could bring salvation, and that his entire family practiced the law of Moses. He also insisted that he had ceased observing the fast in September after the plague of 1656, when he was preparing to marry Anna Brancaccio, and that he hadn't observed it since. Though he didn't elaborate further on the reasons for it, this shift in the count's behavior had also been noted by Antonio Suarez Coronel, who noted that Vaaz had married his remaining daughters to Neapolitan gentlemen who were all "pure and unsullied" Christians.<sup>22</sup>

After the count, it was the turn of Enrique Suarez Coronel and Benedetto di Giorgio Vaaz to confess. Suarez Coronel described himself as a model Catholic upon his arrival in Italy in the service of Rodrigo Gomez de Sandoval y Mendoza, the Duke of the Infantado, who had recently been named ambassador to the Holy See, and, as in the case of his brother, it was only through contact with his relatives in Naples that he was slowly introduced to crypto-Judaism. Benedetto di Giorgio, having grown up in the household, placed his conversion very early, at the age of eleven, when his father instructed him to fast in September and read the psalms.<sup>23</sup> Thus, several years of jurisdictional conflict and legal maneuvering in Naples, followed by months of imprisonment in Rome, finally resulted in unanimous and coordinated confessions to the crime of apostasy. The inquisitors in Rome and Naples never doubted that behind the occasional and highly theatrical gestures of Catholic piety by



the Count and his family lay a long-standing practice of Judaism, and in their view concluding the investigation that had begun over forty years prior was simply a matter of placing the family under enough pressure for a sufficiently long period.

Once the prisoners in Rome had confessed to apostasy, the focus of the investigation moved to Naples, where many of the remaining members of the Vaaz family had waited in silence while the head of the clan was being interrogated in Rome. The news of the surrender of the Count of Mola and the other prisoners in Rome left the remaining members of the family without any protection, and within a month most of them had confessed as well. Their testimony was patiently collected by Camillo Piazza, the minister of the Inquisition appointed in November of 1659 by the cardinal inquisitors. The first to come forward, on April 1, was Grazia Vaaz, one of the count's sisters. She admitted to having been induced to follow the Jewish law by her mother, who promised her a ring if she professed faith in a single God. She and her sisters were raised to observe the Jewish Sabbath, "our festival", on Saturdays, and nurtured their faith through by reading texts that contained retellings of the Old Testament, such as Alfonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum* and a Spanish life of Mary Magdalen. Her sister Fiorenza made a similar confession, adding that she had been taught to recite the *Gloria patri* without reference to the son and the Holy Spirit, as a purely monotheistic prayer. Within a few days, another eight members of the third generation of the Vaaz living in Naples (the children of Simone, Giorgio, and Tommaso), and their children had come before the minister of the Inquisition and confessed.<sup>24</sup>

The confessions revealed a classic marrano "conspiracy", consisting of secret devotional practices, the use of clandestine texts, and occasional group rituals and observances focused around major Jewish holidays. The Vaaz family was able to use their immense palaces in Naples to hide their activities from prying eyes, and took similar advantage of the remote estates. It was a trusted circle of initiates that few were allowed to enter: aside from the immediate members of the family, there was a small group of outsiders who were trusted by the Vaaz and admitted into their circle, allowing them to take part in aspects of their crypto-Jewish observances. Francisco Bianco, a slave who had belonged to the first Count of Mola, continued to serve the family and depend on their charity in the following decades. His religious history was unclear; though he appeared to have received baptism in Naples, he quickly became a member of the crypto-Jewish circle led by his owners. Simone Vaaz's daughter Grazia recalled that his mother introduced him to her as part

of her own secret education in Judaism. He described himself as a Jew, provided *piane azzimo* and copies of the psalms and other religious texts in Spanish, and told the family when to fast and when certain holidays, such as *el dia grande*, Yom Kippur, were arriving. In Grazia's words, "he was the director of the observances that the rest of us undertook." Bianco died before he could be interrogated by the Holy Office, one of the many victims of the plague of 1656.<sup>25</sup>

Tommaso Ulloa, born in Portugal, had arrived in Naples after escaping from enslavement in Algiers. Duarte Vaaz described meeting him when Ulloa stopped his runaway horse in the streets of the city, but kept his distance after hearing that he was a spy for the viceroy. The opinion of most Portuguese in the city was that Ulloa was little more than a *ciarlatore* who overwhelmed his listeners with talk, telling extraordinary lies in order to persuade people to give him money and favors, but he was welcomed by the Vaaz and took on the same role of religious teacher and minister that Francesco Bianco had performed before him. One of the Vaaz remembered that Ulloa had suggested that he go to Livorno to have himself circumcised and told him that there was no possibility of salvation without circumcision. First named by Cesare di Roberto in 1655, Ulloa was arrested in Naples and brought to Rome along with Duarte Vaaz and his brother, but died in the Roman prisons of the Holy Office before he could testify. An autopsy revealed that he had been circumcised as a child.<sup>26</sup> A local mercederian friar also implicated a member of his order, the Portuguese Pedro de Acuña, as a member of Count Duarte's circle. He recalled that fra Pedro was constantly in the company of the Count of Mola and Tommaso Ulloa, and that he violated basic precepts of Christian life, eating meat during lent, and observing the Jewish sabbath. Eventually he abandoned the monastery altogether and went to live in some rooms above a bakery that belonged to the count. His home became a meeting point for the city's Portuguese expatriates, the setting for ambiguous encounters and card games. Through a cousin in Livorno, his accuser alleged, Acuña even maintained contact with Jews.<sup>27</sup>

At the beginning of June, Camillo Piazza wrote to the cardinal inquisitors to inform them of the developments in his investigation. He considered the confessions, especially the most recent one, by Tommaso Gomez d'Acosta, to be credible and sincere, and expressed the hope that he had "put the last touches on this trial of the Vaaz family and their relatives . . ."; one of his assistants wrote in a second letter that "the trial of the *ghetto vecchio* is over," while intimating that another, of the *ghetto nuovo*, was on the horizon.<sup>28</sup> By September, the investigative portion of

the trial had been brought to a conclusion, and the delicate final phase of the trial was coming into view. In a letter to Rome, Piazza expressed the tension in the city as all awaited the conclusion: "Regarding the end of such an important case, permit me to inform your lordships of the feelings of his excellency the viceroy, who on more than one occasion has demonstrated his desire to see some sort of public demonstration, or at least be informed about what's going on, so that no one can say that after conceding so much to the Holy Office, he received nothing in return..." The viceroy was even more concerned, he wrote, because a rumor had spread throughout the city that the count would be completely exonerated and let free. At the same time, Piazza wrote that he was receiving insistent requests from the Brancaccio, the family of Duarte Vaaz's second wife, that the count be spared any embarrassing public punishment or humiliation that would bring shame upon them as well.<sup>29</sup>

In the end, the propaganda value of the Vaaz trial was too great to keep the results secret. In January 1661, a formal abjuration ceremony was held in Rome, at the palace of the Sant'Uffizio, for the five convicted judaizers who had been tried there. Similar ceremonies followed in Naples, until March. The spectacle of Vaaz defeated, dressed in the penitential habitello, sentenced to remain in prison, his family humiliated, his status in Naples damaged, was a satisfying one for the Inquisition and the Roman curia, a demonstration of the continuing power of the Holy Office even in the face of the evident decline of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Naples and elsewhere in Italy. The minister of the Inquisition in Naples and his Roman backers had successfully challenged the power of one of southern Italy's most powerful barons, and overcome the reservations of a series of Spanish viceroys to allow his prosecution. The sentence demonstrated the gravity of the crimes committed: Vaaz was declared a formal apostate, and sentenced to *carcere perpetuo*<sup>30</sup> and a fine of 2000 scudi.

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The humiliation of the Vaaz was compounded on January 8, 1661, when the viceroy, having received news of the Holy Office's sentence, ordered the confiscation of the count's property as a civil sentence for the crimes for which he had been convicted. The vast wealth of the Vaaz came into the possession of the state, and a family which had few equals in the realm was reduced to a fraction of its former value. The decision to confiscate the property of a condemned heretic or apostate, while it

could be amply sustained by canon law, was in practice barely employed in the activities of the Roman Inquisition. The relative absence of it in Italy was considered one of the elements that distinguished the blander Roman Inquisition from its ferocious Iberian counterparts, and the city of Naples had been particularly hostile to this brand of penalty. Fear of confiscation had been one of the major justifications for the 1547 revolt against the Spanish Inquisition, and in 1554, perhaps in response to the Neapolitan protest, Julius III had outlawed the confiscation of property as an inquisitorial penalty, though the ban was lifted by his successor Paul IV in time to reap enormous sums of money from Jews and New Christians in Ancona and the Marches.<sup>31</sup>

The confiscation of Vaaz's property was not ordered by the Inquisition, and it does not appear that any of it was intended to be given to the Holy Office. The cardinal inquisitors even privately expressed concern about the repercussions of the seizure of Vaaz's property, and attempted to convince the viceroy to abandon the sentence. Nevertheless, it was ordered as a civil penalty for an inquisitorial condemnation, and many members of the Neapolitan aristocracy and municipal government saw the sentence as a *de facto* resurrection of the hated *Inquisitione a modo di spagna* that they believed their forefathers had defeated a century prior. When, immediately after the confiscation order, Piazza imprudently arrested a servant of the Duke of Noci for an unrelated charge, the stage was set for a backlash on a scale which neither the viceroy or the inquisitor had anticipated. The duke called a meeting of the *seggi* of the city to call for the expulsion of the inquisitor and demand guarantees from Rome regarding his replacement, as well as a more rigorous adherence to the laws governing the tribunal's presence in the city. Though the viceroy refused to concede any ground, the nuncio attempted to quiet the outcry by publicly promising that the pope would take an interest in the matter, but to no avail. On April 12, after a gang of some eighty young noblemen attacked his house, Piazza fled the city and took refuge in Terracina, just across the border separating the kingdom from the papal state.<sup>32</sup>

Piazza's dramatic flight from Naples left one of the city's two inquisitorial tribunals unmanned, and threw the city into an open political crisis. The *seggi* continued to insist on Piazza's replacement with a native Neapolitan, while the viceroy and the allies of the Holy Office were reluctant to concede to a protest which they viewed as directed at the entire institution of the Holy Office. The controversy intensified when an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Reasons of the Most Faithful City of Naples in the Affairs of the Inquisition* appeared in the city in October,

a treatise that offered a dense historical and legal argument on behalf of the seggi and made public several documents that their representatives had drafted during the controversy. Peppering his text with erudite citations from Cicero and Lucretius, the author of the *Reasons* insisted that the behavior of Piazza, and especially the confiscation of the property of the Count of Mola, were violations of custom and privilege. Neapolitans, the tract began "are most resolute in maintaining the custom of their forefathers to never expose their backs to the weight of the Inquisition, a name which is odious to this entire city and kingdom." After recounting the immediate reasons for the protest of the seggi, the author listed a series of reasons why inquisitorial justice represented an "Iliad of miseries": too frequent and too facile use of torture, excessive zeal in the pursuit of minor offenses, such as those committed by Catholic merchants operating in Protestant countries, and a legal praxis that sought confession at all costs, often making it more convenient for suspects to incriminate themselves than attempt to prove their innocence. The author even accused the Inquisition of intentionally failing to make public the names of those it had exonerated, in order to avoid damaging the tribunal's image. After listing the many offenses of the Inquisition, the pamphlet closed with the admission that the Inquisition was a legitimate means of combating the evil of heresy, but stated that Naples had never harbored heretics; what was for some a medicine might prove "poisonous to a healthy body." The pamphlet did not question the necessity of a tribunal that investigated crimes against the faith, but insisted that the only figure who could legitimately lay claim to such an authority was the local bishop, presumably following a blander form of procedure. As the ideas of the *Reasons* and other anti-inquisitorial tracts took hold, what had begun as a protest against a single inquisitor threatened to enter into far more dangerous territory, calling into question the legitimacy of the Holy Office and its place in the city's legal system. As many of the leading representatives of the city simultaneously declared their unshaken loyalty to the Roman Church and the King of Spain while rebelling against their representatives, one chronicler summed up the situation in a phrase: "Naples adores the Holy Office, but wants no Inquisition."<sup>33</sup>

Following the appearance of the *Reasons*, the viceroy arrested all of the city's printers in an attempt to find out who really stood behind the pseudonym and false location, Pesaro, printed on the cover of the pamphlet.<sup>34</sup> On December 6, he offered a bounty for any information regarding the text's author. But in a war of words in which the city stood largely behind its representatives, these were largely futile

gestures. A series of tracts in defense of the government and the Holy Office may have been more effective, though none, it seems, were ever published. The most eloquent of these was written by Roberto Mazzucci, a jurist in the service of the viceroy, who argued that Vaaz's penalty was fully justified by the gravity of his crime. Not only had Vaaz committed apostasy, so had his father, and he had maintained his false beliefs for over two decades. Rather than entering into the debate over custom and royal privilege that the anti-inquisitorial party sought to engage him in, Mazzucci based his argument on the general, and in his view, entirely sound precepts of Roman law. He argued that apostasy constituted a far graver offense than an ordinary crime, as it was directed against God, and thus violated in a single stroke the divine precepts and the bonds of the Christian republic. Vaaz had committed an act of *lesa maestà divina*, and there could be no question of conceding him a pardon or revising his sentence, which had been legitimately and correctly emitted by the viceroy. Mazzucci marshaled a long list of royal and ecclesiastical legislation from the thirteenth century onward that prescribed confiscation as a penalty for the crime of heresy or apostasy. Against the objections of those who invoked the bull of Julius III prohibiting confiscations, he objected that not only had the bull been only a temporary measure, which applied only to heretics and not apostates, it had been surpassed by legislation by two of the pope's successors, Paul IV and Pius V. There was no doubt in Mazzucci's view that the actions of the government were legitimate: "Duarte Vaaz may turn where he may, but he will find no place that is not full of thorns, as it has been demonstrated that the confiscation of his property was justified in its every aspect..."<sup>35</sup>

Ultimately, however, the pressure of the combined protest of the city and the kingdom's aristocracy proved stronger than any argument. In June 1662, the secretary of the Council of Italy, Iñigo de Zarate, informed the Count of Peñaranda that the king had ordered the restitution of the Count of Mola's property. The viceroy duly executed the order, removing the main object of contention and putting an end to the controversy. Over a year had passed since the initial decree, and the count remained in the Roman prisons of the Holy Office, but his patrimony, the source of his political power and social status and that of his children, had been restored. Rumor had it that the count was now free to move around the city of Rome and was planning to return to Naples soon.<sup>36</sup>

More than before, the Vaaz seem to have been the beneficiaries of an extraordinary set of circumstances. The agitation of the most important



popular and aristocratic representatives of the city on their behalf, in a tense and lengthy controversy whose participants explicitly evoked the events of 1547, was perhaps the only force capable of removing the penalties that the viceroy had imposed on him following the condemnation of the Holy Office. The leaders of the protest acted not out of a sense of loyalty to Vaaz, however, but rather out of the fear that his treatment was exemplary, an attempt to install an even more strictly authoritarian regime in Naples in which the condemnations of the church served to enrich and strengthen the state. The same aristocrats who viewed Vaaz as a rival in earlier times now saw him as an embattled victim, while the rising professional and legal class known as the *ceto civile*, saw his case as an important moment in their own struggle for greater autonomy and intellectual liberty.<sup>37</sup> The Vaaz family, which before the trial's beginning had engineered a vigorous and multifaceted defensive strategy against the Inquisition was remarkably absent during the tumultuous months of protest in 1661 and 1662. The Count's wife, Anna Brancaccio, appeared before the Consiglio Collaterale to plead for mercy; she complained that she had been impoverished by the confiscation of her husband's property, which had cut off income to her household, and argued, as the parliamentary representatives had before her, that the sentence against her family contradicted Julius III's moratorium on confiscations.

After 1662 the Vaaz began the slow process of rebuilding their family fortunes; the trials had weakened, but not ruined them. Though the family had reacquired its property and titles, the dishonor of the inquisitorial condemnations placed them even further on the margins of the city's social and political life. After receiving a further pardon from the viceroy, Duarte Vaaz was released from the Roman prisons of the Holy Office in 1667, and returned to Naples, where he died four years later. Despite the repeal of the confiscation order, the count and his heirs found themselves heavily indebted after the conclusion of the trials. In 1667, he sold the estates of Casamassima and San Michele, the very locations that his uncle had attempted to populate with Slavs more than fifty years prior. And when in 1670 the city of Mola sued for autonomy from the Vaaz, it finally received a favorable sentence. In reality, the decision produced an even lengthier period of litigation between Duarte's son and grandson and the city council, which lasted until the late eighteenth century, but the family's economic and social horizons were drastically limited. Though Benedetto Maria Vaaz, Duarte's grandson, still vaunted the title of Count of Mola in the mid-eighteenth century, the economic basis for the family's stature slowly

diminished as a new class of merchants and professionals took over control of the resources and economic activities that had been the exclusive prerogative of the Vaaz in times past. The city government was occupied by permissive tax collectors and royal officials, and the Vaaz became a family of rural gentry, relics of a different age.

As in the case of the previous anti-judaizing campaign conducted by the Inquisition in Naples, the Vaaz were not the only target, and the investigators assiduously followed clues acquired during questioning and interrogated new suspects based on the testimony of witnesses and confessed apostates. The other major noble families of converso origin largely managed to avoid the interest of the Inquisition, including the Pinto and the Palma. The Vargas, whose patriarch Alfonso had followed a similar path to wealth and titles as the one blazed by Miguel Vaaz at the beginning of the seventeenth century, were an exception. Though Alfonso Vargas had been long dead when the investigation began, he was accused of crypto-Judaism by several witnesses, along with his wife Zenobia Nave. When the Inquisition began to investigate his family, the only one of Alfonso's sons still living was Giovanni, who several of the Vaaz had mentioned by name. Brought to Rome for trial, he too confessed to having practiced Judaism, and abjured at Santa Maria sopra Minerva. When he was released from prison, he returned to Naples, where his nephews Alfonso and Diego Vargas murdered him in the street, apparently in a dispute over money. After the murder, the brothers fled to their estates in Apulia then to Rome, where they briefly joined the entourage of Queen Christina of Sweden. When the two brothers were finally captured, they were sent to serve in the military; Alfonso was murdered in Barcelona, while his brother returned to the estate of Cagnano after serving in the garrison at Milan. The family was dishonored as much by the murder as by the crypto-Judaism imputed to it, but ultimately was more successful than the Vaaz in maintaining their property and status in the wake of the inquisitorial campaign.<sup>38</sup>

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The prosecution of the Vaaz was conducted by an inquisitorial system of justice that had seen important changes since the 1570s, when it last came into contact with conversos in the city of Naples. The inquisitors both in Rome and Naples had learned most of the lessons of the 1570s, and there is little trace of the disorganization, improvisation, and indiscriminate use of torture that marred the earlier trials in the campaign of the 1660s. The officials of the Holy Office proceeded

slowly and deliberately over many decades, accumulating evidence and preparing every move with care. Their frequent communication with the cardinal inquisitors in Rome is a sign of their awareness of the political implications of the case and their intention to proceed cautiously.

But if the Inquisition had changed to meet the circumstances, so had the New Christians. The Vaaz had acquired much more durable and explicit links to the viceroy and the makers of Spanish policy in Madrid than their sixteenth century predecessors, and they proved to be exceptionally skilled at employing their influence and knowledge of the legal and administrative systems of the city to their advantage. Even after Duarte Vaaz had confessed to apostasy and languished under an indefinite prison sentence in Rome, he must have considered the minister Piazza's flight from Naples in 1661 something of a personal victory and a sign that his tribulations may have been coming to an end. At the same time, after decades in which ecclesiastical jurisdiction was challenged, largely successfully, by the state, the Inquisition found a much less willing partner in the viceroys of Naples, whose orders came from the Council of Italy, and who knew precisely how much the Spanish state stood to lose by unnecessarily damaging its creditors.

Much less clear is the role of the Neapolitan state, the faithful ally of the Vaaz family until 1657, when the Count of Peñaranda abandoned the count to the Holy Office and attempted to devour his patrimony, a cynical and poorly calculated decision that he was eventually forced to retract. Information regarding the Vaaz's involvement in state finances is especially scarce after the 1620s, but in light of the rapidly declining finances of the Spanish viceroys during the second half of the seventeenth century, the decision to finally consign the Vaaz to the Holy Office and attempt to profit in the aftermath seems born of weakness rather than strength, a desperate attempt to take advantage of the Vaaz's wealth when cooperation no longer appeared convenient. A state in need of cash might have come to view the land and income belonging to the Vaaz as more desirable than the possibility of continuing to collaborate with the family, a sure sign that the alliance between the conversos and the viceroys, a central aspect of the administration of the finances of the kingdom of Naples since the days of Pedro de Toledo was coming to an end.

# Conclusion

The seventeenth century came to a close with one of the most brutal examples of anti-converso violence ever perpetrated by Neapolitan ecclesiastical authorities. In 1687, a Spaniard receiving last rites in the hospital of San Giacomo admitted to the priests attending him that he was born into the law of Israel and wanted to die in it as well. Shocked by the revelation and fearing for the sick man's soul, the priests placed his hand on an open flame in an attempt to terrify him into conversion. The converso resisted, and "with great constancy suffered martyrdom and died half-burned in his perverse law."<sup>1</sup> This shocking and brutal act was nevertheless a bit past its time; the local courts of the Inquisition had largely ceased to investigate cases of apostasy to Judaism by this date, and the last major investigations of the Spanish Inquisition were on the horizon. Crypto-Judaism, though it continued to exist in practice as an object of polemics by ecclesiastical and political figures, was on its way out, gradually decriminalized by the very courts that had pursued it for centuries.

But if the violent punishment meted out to this unfortunate converso was anachronistic, so, in some way, was his presence in the city. There were increasingly few reasons for New Christians to establish themselves in Naples during these years, while the political system that had provided them with opportunity and positioned them among the favored groups of financiers and bureaucrats in the city was entering the final stages of its existence. The 1690s were an especially cruel decade for the Kingdom of Naples, a period when the city teetered on the brink of anarchy, the scene of increasingly bold challenges to the authority of the state by a violent aristocracy whose members openly battled one another with impunity while the last Spanish viceroys, without the means or manpower to enforce their rule, stood by helplessly.

Everything pointed toward an implosion of Spanish power in Naples, which is exactly what occurred. The death of Charles II of Spain in 1700 and the ten years of warfare that followed it brought Spanish rule in Naples to an end, and after the treaty of Rastatt in 1714, the Kingdom of Naples passed to the Austrian Habsburgs. The Spanish Empire, which had shaped and dominated Neapolitan life for two centuries, abandoned Italy at the beginning of the eighteenth century, never to return.<sup>2</sup>

The turmoil of the War of the Spanish Succession also coincided with the final decline of the vast series of commercial networks that Sephardic Jews and conversos had constructed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The beginning of the eighteenth century was precisely the period when a combination of the political and military conflict and the overextension of the commercial networks themselves led to their disintegration. One especially important factor was the interruption of trade between the Dutch Republic and Spain and its colonies, which severed trade in many of the commodities which the Sephardic merchants had specialized, including slaves. Important enterprises in the hands of Sephardic merchants, such as a monopoly on the provision of slaves to the Spanish American colonies, passed into the hands of the English government, and Portuguese New Christians were gradually excluded from tax farming and positions in the financial administration of Castile, a sector that they had conquered during the early decades of the previous century and held ever since. The conversos who remained in Spain and Portugal after the end of the war found themselves in a much more vulnerable position than before, and after the last major demonstration of inquisitorial activism began, around 1720, there was very little left of the formerly flourishing converso and crypto-Jewish society in Spain.<sup>3</sup> If anyone in Naples took note of the collapse of converso society in Spain, they left no record of it. The small, powerful, and wealthy minority that had played a leading role throughout the two centuries of Spanish rule was no longer visible in public life in southern Italy and had become indistinguishable from the society that surrounded it.

# Appendix: Documents from the 1569–1581 Campaign

In the following pages, transcriptions of some of the most important documents from the first wave of trials against the New Christians in Naples are provided, both as an aid to further interpretations of the events described in the book and for other investigations which lay outside its scope. The documents represent an eloquent testimony from an early period in the history of the Italian tribunals of the Holy Office, and complement a relatively small body of analogous material from other archives.

The documents are of two kinds. The first and most important are the series of trial records containing verbal testimony and official decrees, including sentences, conserved in the fondo *Sant'Ufficio* of the *Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli*. These documents contain not only vivid testimony regarding the social background and religious practices of the accused judaizers, but are also essential for establishing an accurate chronology of an extremely lengthy and complex campaign. Despite the heavy damage that the manuscripts have sustained over the centuries, and the disorganized way in which they were bound and preserved, together with the written correspondence from the archbishops of Naples and their assistants to the members of the Congregation of the Holy Office, they allow for a reconstruction of several crucial aspects of the trials, including the retracted confessions and accusations of corruption that most concerned the cardinal inquisitors.

The appendix is divided into two sections, the first containing material from the trial records, the second containing exemplary pieces of correspondence.

In addition to the letters from the central archive transcribed here, several letters relating to the trials taken from various pieces of archival material in ASDN are available in Pierroberto Scaramella, ed. *Le lettere*



della Congregazione del Sant'Ufficio ai tribunali di fede di Napoli (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2002).

In transcribing these documents, I have followed modern punctuation and undone abbreviated words and phrases. Hypothetical words and phrases have been placed in brackets, while ellipses mark lacunae in the text. I have modernized the accents and punctuation.

## I. Testimony

### 1. Mundina Beltrana's second deposition (ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 129, f. 37r–38v)

Die xxvii eiusdem mensis octobris 1569 Neapoli in monasterio Sancte Marie Consolationis et coram reverendo domino generale locumtenente

Constituta Mundina Beltrana principalis quo ad se et testis quo ad alios et prima instantia... pluribus charitativis monitionibus eidem ut dicat veritatem... sue conscientie et quod manifestet complices, dixit ad interrogationem factam: io dico la verita io ho osservato lo sabbato, non in dispregio de cristo, ma credendomi de far bene perche Dio lo comanda perche Dio lo comandava alla lege vecchia, et per devotione lo ho fatto, et non per peccare. Et io me ne son confessata, et dicto che lo faceva per devotione, ma non dico che lo osservava perche faceva il rito de giudeo, ma confesso mo liberamente che ho fatto errore perche me lo conosco, et lo signor vicario me ha aperto la mente, et li occhi et factome conoscere la verita, et mi è stata offuscata la mente che non sapeva che fare. Et de più io ho havuto un sentimento dela scrittura nova quando se legge a Matteo o a Luca, *non veni solvendum legem, sed adimplendum*, et per questa ragione et authorità io ho pigliato qualche cosa dela lege vecchia, et osservato li sabbati, et ricordandomi che salomone havendo facto lo tempio verso oriente disse... tutti quelli li quali farano oratione verso questa casa santa che tutti li esaudischi, sapendo io che la casa santa sta verso lo oriente, et per questa ragione voltava li occhi verso detta parte del oriente, et se ho fatto errore me ne emendo. Et mi ricordo di più che legendo lo libro de Esdra, dove si legge... *non imposuit penitentiam Abramo, Isaac, et Jacob, et illis q. sibi non peccaverunt* per il che io argumentava fra me stessa, et una volta con Isabella mia nepote morta, se Idio non dia penitentia alli predetti come è vero che Cristo li levò dal limbo, et hebbero penitentia tanti anni primi de la gloria de Dio. Et de questo ho vaccillato tanto tempo et lo ho dicto allo confessore, et mi ricordo de più che se in Malechia profeta o in altro se legge, lo mandarro, seu se levarano i servi miei, et ve li mandaro Helias un altra volta. Et io diceva et congeturava che havesse da venire lo giorno del

Judicio, il quale Helia non si trova de chi è figlio, nè manco morse, et de più Io ho osservato che la sera della festa passata sia del giorno venturo, et trapanava fusa, et facea altri exercicij de casa.

Interrogata ut dicat veritatem sub pena confessi criminis et delicti, chi altri sonno stati di questo rito, et legge che manifesta la verita per servitio de Dio, dixit: io per me non mi ricordo nessuna, et sopra questo ci farrò pensieri per qualche dì, et se mi ricordo alcuno lo dico, per levarme la scomonica da sopra. Et ad opportunam domini interrogationem, dixit: io mai ho magnato li azzimi la settimana santa, ne li conosco, si bene ho fatto pastizzi de pesce compressi di settimana santa et la pasca.

Interrogata come passa il fatto de libro che teneva in la soa sacca quella sera che fu cercata la casa de Lavinia Petralbes, dixit: La verita è questa che non voglio negarla, che io havea nascosto il detto libro nela mia sacca, quando quelli canonici vennero a far la cerca nela mia camera per [portarlo] a Vostra Signoria, perché bene vi conosceva, et essendo circa una hora de nocte Lavinia et Virginia matre et figlia con pregarme et exortarme, et forzarme, si come già fecero che io loro desse il detto libro, cossi io lo consignai alla detta lavinia, et se lo pigliò, et non so che ne habbia fatto, et de più a quella hora in quella forza, io li dissi: Non me lo brusciar, tenetelo, che non voglio che si perde, et essa Lavinia mi disse che non havesse pagura, et poi da Vostra Signoria ho inteso per detto dele citelle che fu bruciato.

Interrogata sub eisdem penis quod dicat che cosa era in detto libro, et se era scritto a mano, volgar o latino, o in hebreo, spagnolo, o italiano, dixit: Era il salmista breviato de San Geronimo et piu salmi di Davit et ce era latino, et signor Pirro Antonio Lectierj me lo scrisse. Et ostenso sibi libro reperso in domo lavinie, [et quo] dicta lavinia tenebat, et si consimile fuisset in eodem suo libro, et per eam viso, dixit: Non ce era oratione nessuna consimile a questo libro, et avante che messer Pirro Antonio Lectierj ho havuto dicto libro, et rare volte lo leggeva, et lo fici legar da messer Pirro Antonio Lectierj medesimo et non da altro. Et lo hebbe dicto Pirro Antonio dicto libro da Gasparre de Lectierj suo nepote carnale, et me disse che piu non hebbe de detti libri et che ne dispensò a più persone. Et ad opportunam interrogationem dixit: io non ho havuto detto libro per sospetto, et per questo desiderava che fosse stato visto da Vostra Signoria et che non fosse perso, acciò fosse visto se era bono o tristo. Et dicente domino, se è la verita, se quando essa costituita lo leggeva, et veneano forastieri che lei lo nascondeva in quello miglior modo che poteva, dixit: io non me ne ricordo, e potria esser questo. Et... sibi diceret de modo orandi, an recte, vel sedens, seu prona genuflecta, lingens terram orasset quotiens, et a quanto tempore citra

dixit: Io ho orato alla assettata per esser inferma, et una o due volte ho orato cola bocca in terra sola la avemaria. Et dicente domino si carnes porcinas nunquam comederit, dixit. Io ho magnato sopresate, presutto, ma lardo non ne posso magnar perche mi fa danno.

Interrogata... sub pena ignis, et relapsi quod dicat veritatem, dixit: io decesette anni sonno che non ho havuto pratica stretta con Portia Bruno, benche fosse mia alleva et nepote, et non saccio se è bona o trista, ne tampoco ho inteso dire se si delectava di queste cose judaiche.

Interrogata sub eisdem penis et censuris ut dicat veritatem, si have inteso che virginia figlia de lavinia have osservato il sabato à modo deli hebrej, et da quanto tempo dixit: io non lo saccio, ne mai lo ho inteso, perche da augusto in qua solo conosco la Virginia Fonseca.

Et... sibi diceret per che causa, poichè essa Virginia non sequita lo stile della matre, venne quella sera del vernadi a pigliar il suo libro dala sacca, dixit: potria esser, et non potria esser, io non so perche ce venne, forsi ce venne per timore della matre.

Subdens ex se dixit: Ben vi prego, che questo sia secreto con tutti, perche ho dicto la verita, la quale non dissi l'altro hieri, ma perche son cristiana et voglio morire da cristiana, et vorria più presto un palmo de vergogna, che un tarpiso de danno all'anima.

Et propter hore tarditatem dominus locumtenens dimisit examen, animo ipsam totiens quotiens fuit opportunus prorogandi...

io Mundina Beltrana

## 2. Giovanni de Pisis, regarding the books found in Lavinia Petralbes' house (ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 129, f. 182r)

Die xxi mensis januarij 1570 Neapoli

Magnificus Joannes de Pisis Pisanus... Neapoli comorans ad Montecalvario etatis annorum triginta sex incirca ut dixit introductus in camera Reverendi Pietro Dusina generalis locumtenentis per quem delato sibi juramento de veritate dicenda super recognitione [infrascripti] libri

Et primo ostenso eidem testi quodam libro coperto pelle rubea manuscripto incipiente: Verba mea auribus percipe et finiente exaltabo te Domine, et per ipsum bene viso et reviso atque lecto prout et asseruit diebus elapsis coram reverendissimo domino archiepiscopo neapolitano dictum librum [alias] vidisse et perlegisse dixit: Questo libro io come pratico perche prima son stato ebreo so ch'è la copia del ufficio delle orationi che usano gli ebrei spagnoli in tutte le loro feste et giornalmente ancora, quale libro si dimostra apertamente essere stato translato da verbo ad verbum da uno officio seu libro ebraico. In questo libro che

si vede a me monstrato scripto a mano, in lingua spagniola, et gia ci apparenno, et si vedono alcune orationi seu salmi in latino et volgare.

Et sic dominus mandavit eidem testi declarari si inter fideles cristianos liber huiusmodi potest detineri, an sit prohibitus, qui respondens dixit:

Io credo che per essere volgare sia prohibito fra fideli cristiani atteso se dimonstra che quello o quella apresso del quale si è ritrovato se n'habbia servito.

Io Joannes de Pisis ut supra ho detto et recognosciuto il detto libro como di sopra si contiene mano propria me suscrissi

P. Tassus

### **3. Revising false testimony: Portia Bruno's first deposition before Pietro Dusina (ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 1r–2v)**

Die nono mensis Januarij 1571 Neapoli in monasterio monialium Sancte Marie Consolationis coram Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Domino Archiepiscopo neapolitano...Magnifici et Reverendi Domini Petri Dusini utroque juris doctoris...assistentibusque Illustrissimo Domino Fernando Carrafa et Domino Andrea de Sarno canonico neapolitano

Constituta coram prefato illustrissimo domino Portia Bruno alias Beltranna etatis annorum triginta sex annorum in circa ut dixit. medio suo iuramento [juravit] tactis scripturis de veritate dicenda super infrascriptos...per eundem dominum Petrum

Interrogata an aliquid sibi occurrat addere in depositionibus suis alias factis

Respondit: io non ho da giunger altro se non che quello che ho ditto, l'ho ditto piu per pagura, che fosse verità perché la abbadessa sore Antonia che allora mi diceva ogni hora perche io dormiva in soa camera: Figlia mia si tu non dici quello che vole lo vicario, te porterano a brusciar al mercato, et io diceva: Perché, che ho fatto, et le sudette monache [foro] tutte presenti quando haveva giurato sopra del calice, che come io diceva tutto quello che essa voleva, che subito me ne haveria mandato via, et se no che me haveria bruciata viva, et sore Antonia abbatesa...che lo vicario volea pigliare quattro carcerate et voleva portare tutte le monache et voleva portarle al mercato a veder lo brusciar che volea far de noi. Et io per questo dissi quello che ho detto che sempre ho fatto officio di bona cristiana et confessato et comunicato come ogni bona cristiana, et quando me portorno al arcivescovado che mi dettero la corda mi

dicevano di', et io diceva: Non so che dir, et quando fui llà di sopra mi scesero senza che io dicessi scenditimi che io non parlava, et mi buttorno acqua in faccia quando io tornai a saglire battero la corda, et lo vicario mi tirò per le... dela gonella ancora et dissero di', io dissi: Non so che dir... signora Lavinia da dentro de una camera, et disse Portia di', et io dissi: Non so che dir et essa mi disse: Dicitu tutto quello che voleno loro, perché mi hanno detto che hanno portato le legne al mercato per bruciarse domano matino, et che questo lo havea inteso essa signora Lavinia dal signor Cesar Cangiano si come essa signora Lavinia mi disse, et io dissi: Che voliti che dica, io non so che dir, dicitu voi per me, che Io non so che dire, disse lo Cangiano: Dicitu voi, et io dissi che voglio dir, mi disse, di' che sei una giodea, et io dissi: giodea sia, scinditimi per amore de Dio non più, et io dico che allora non dissi niente altro se non che intrai in una camera, et lo di seguente mi dissero quello che hai ditto alla corda é la verità, io dissi de si per pagura de haver pegio.

Interrogata [quod] contra illa particulariter [pretenderetur]

Respondit: Quelli che mi domandorno foro lo signor Cesar Cangiano, et lo signor Oracio Galluccio, et non mi domandorno altro solo che se io era una giodea, et io dissi scenditimi per lo amore de dio, che so giodea, et la corte pretendeva che io havessi portata non so che azzimi alla signora Lavinia Petralbes de Fonseca.

Interrogata quid sint azzimi, et quomodo conficiantur

Respondit: io non so che cosa siano, ne mai tal cosa ho visto, con tutto che dissi de sì, et lo dissi per timore dela corda.

Et Interim interrogata si quid aliud... pretenderit ipsum preter de portatione azzimorum domine lavinie et monita benigne quod dicat veritatem super hoc, q.m veritas apparet.

Respondit: niente altro pretendeva, nè fui altrimenti examinata per altro che di questo.

Et interrogata quod reddat [rationem] vite sue à pueritia, ex quibus parentibus orta sit, ubi nata, ubi educata, quas conversationes habuerit et cuius... sit.

Respondit: Mio patre fu Gianotto Beltrano di Napoli et era gentil-homo spagnolo e di razza spagnolo, et vivea d'intrata, et stava in Napoli et era in Napoli nato, et mia matre si chiamò Polita Beltrana, et erano nati cristiani. Io nacqui in Napoli dali presenti et fui baptizzata come tutti li cristiani et fui cresimata che mi ricordo era da nove anni, et son stata allevata a Santo Nastase. Poi morse mio patre... che me havessero pigliata dalla notriccia, et andai in poter

de Mundina Beltrana de tre anni incirca, et in casa de Mundina stetti insino che mi accasai, et in casa soa mi maritai, et llà si fecero le nozze, alli decesette de ottobre passato fecero quindici anni che mi accasai con Benedetto Bondo che è mercante in banchi de età di anni sessantacinque, et con esso son stata continuamente come bon marito, et moglie.

Interrogata an litteras didicerit, vel aliqua alia arte soleat mulieres ediscere et a quibus, et cum quibus solita sit conversari.

Respondit: io non ho imparato a leger perché non ne ho havuto intelletto, con tutto che mi ci fosse posta più volte, et ad interrogationem dixit: Mundina è stata quella che me volea insegnare cio è . . . non ho possuto imparare altro che lo paternoster

Et interrogata quare Mundina domui sue . . . [et si sepe domo exiret] . . . cum aliis esset, et cum quibus, et in domo prefate mundine . . .

Respondit: io non usceva mai da casa, et mia cia predetta mi tenea in casa come soa nepote, et non usceva mai se non quando andavamo a messa et a confessare, et comunicare, et la mundina è donna cossi solitaria et anco per esser zoppa, non visitava nessuna, ne tampoco era visitata.

Interrogata quod dicat quibus confitebatur sua peccata, postquam dixerit solita fuisse singulis annis confiteri.

Respondit: Quando io era citella à santo Joanne maggiore era un prete che mi confessava, et poiche son stata maritata mi son confessata à un frate di Santa Maria dela Nova chiamato frate Gabriele, et mi solea confessare due volte lo anno, la Pasca, et lo Natale, et da quattro anni in qua mi sonno confessata ad prete . . . in Santo Jacobo delli Spagnoli

Interrogata an sciat orationem dominicalem, orationem seu salutationem angelicam, et credo, et alia.

Respondit: Signor sì, et recitavit bene orationem dominicalem, et salutationem angelicam, . . . credo, et salve regina non bene recitavit, et dixit nescit aliquem salum

Interrogata ubi sit eius . . .

Respondit: è alla cella nostra, dove lavora, et sta per la medesima causa perche stamo tutte.

Interrogata quod exprimat causam per quam manet ibi.

Respondit. perché el vicario ce hà portato.

Interrogata an cognoscat aliquas personas suspectas de heresi, vel de observatione alicuius ritus contra fidem catholicam, vel saltem nominare intellexerit.



Respondit. Io non conosco, né inteso nominare persona nessuna, se non quelle che [lo stesso] vicario ha nominate qua, quale sonno, la signora Lavinia, et la signora Mundina

Quibus habitis, fuit dimissum examen animo [continuandi]... iniuncto ei silentio et quod se subscribat, vel si scribere nescit, faciat signum crucis

† signum crucis p.e portie scribere nescientis ut dixit

#### 4. Francesco Cartiglia (ASDN, Sant'Ufficio 155, f. 208r-212v)

Die nono februarij 1571 Neapoli in archiepiscopali palatio in aula studii Reverendi Domini Petri Dusine U.J.D. Illustrissimi Domini Archiepiscopi Neapolitani in spiritualibus locumtenentis et coram reverendo Petro Dusina... Reverendo Domino Andrea Sarno canonico neapolitano.

Constitutus et vocatus Magnificus Franciscus Cartiglia etatis annorum quatragenta incirca ut dixit et videtur ... dice habito vicino Monte Calvario, comparuit coram prefato domino Petro...

Interrogatus an sciat causam sue vocationis, vel saltim illam presumit. Respondit: io vengo all'ubidienza.

Interrogatus an putat causam pro qua fuit vocatus.

Respondit: io credo siano per questi romori che corrono.

Interrogatus quod sunt isti rumores.

Respondit: per questi segni che si vedono per napoli di queste genti che son chiamate qui.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: molti credo siano chiamati per principali, et molti per testimonij.

Interrogatus ex qua causa isti vocantur, et quod dicat qui uti testes, et qui uti principales vocentur.

Respondit: io non so la causa dell'altri che si imputa a quelli... si bene dela causa che si imputa a me.

Interrogatus quod dicat quid sibi imputet.

Respondit: di quello che mi domandara vostra signoria, io responderò.

Interrogatus si scit de quo imputatur, vel presumit.

Respondit: io non penso di essere imputato che di un mio scritto che fici l'anno passato del quale hebbi l'absolutione.

Interrogatus quod dicat quid in dicto scripto continetur.

Respondit: io non mi posso ricordar bene di quello che se contene, ma se me monstrarete quel scritto, me ne ricorderò.

Interrogatus quod [saltem] recenseat...

Respondit: Havea circa vinti dui in vinti tre anni, che ritrovandome con la magnifica Violante Cartiglia seu Vitale in casa de socera, et con la detta mia socera nel mese de settembre, mi diedero... ovvero per dire meglio mi dissero che io dovesse degiunare, essendo questa cosa la quale che giovava all'anima mia, però lo giorno che fusse non me ne ricordo... Et non bene me ricordo se fusse avante, o poi, mi diedero un boccone di pane, el quale dovesse mangiare, et veramente quello havendo me lo posi in bocca per mangiarlo, me vado ricordando che intanto detto pane... parendome cosa insipida et non di bon gusto, però questo non fu, pensandome far cosa quale io non dovesse, nè contra la fede, et non mi ricordo de altro che di questo.

Interrogatus qua intentione scriptum suum huiusmodi porrexerit.

Respondit: Io diedi per maggior mio disgravio, perche sentendo questi romori di persone che si pigliavano, andai dal patre Boncore, et li dissi questo, et mi disse che facesse questo mio scritto, subiungens: non so niente di questa vita ne superstitione.

Et monitus quod dicat veritatem super interrogatoriis.

Respondit: del tempo che mangiai quel pane io me confessai ad un padre di san luise, el quale in lo discorso dela confessione, mi dimandò se havea degiunato le quattro tempora, et le vigilie comandate dala santa chiesa, li dissi che havea degiunato, quelli giorni che havea possuto degiunare, et che de più havea degiunato nel mese di settembre, onde volendo intendere che digiuno era questo di settembre, io li raccontai tutto sudeto al che me repose che io giudicando questo essere in salvatione dell'anima mia, et esser cosa bona, che questo non era cossì, ma che erano superstitioni quale io non le doversi fare più, et cossì mi diede la mia assolutione talmente che io raccordandome di questo in detto tempo ne fui dal predetto reverendo padre bonocore per veder quello che li occorreva, et cossì li parse che Io per maggior mio disgravio l'havesse notificato al reverendissimo patre vicario con un mio scritto.

Interrogatus... se confessus est hos errores seu superstitiones, ut in foro conscientie tantum absolveret, vel timore pene..., et qua intentione hoc dixit.

Respondit: io non pensava haver fatto mal nessuno.

Et interrogatus si putabat bene fecisse...

Respondit: io lo fici pensando haver piu tosto meritato, havendo fatto quel di più che l'ecclesia non havea comandato.

Et ei dicto...

Respondit: havendo al confessore prima ditto che questa cosa non era ben fatto, io per mio disgravio volsi confessarmelo di novo.

Interrogatus quod dicat qua die mensis septembris jeiunavit quoque ritu.

Respondit: io mangiai quel di che degiunai la sera al tardo, ma non mi ricordo il di preciso del degiuno.

Interrogatus an ceteri cristiani ita soliti essent ieunare, et qua die intellexerit ab aliis huiusmodi jeiunium solitum esse fieri.

Respondit: io non lo so perche non ne dimandai nessuno di queste cose, se no che lo dissi al mio confessore al tempo della mia confessione.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: io credo che non lo facessero altre persone, eccetto che quelle persone che lo hanno ditto che lo facesse, et si ci trovò mia moglie presente, subiungens, mai ho inteso de che dj di settembre si facesse.

Interrogatus quibus verbis usa est illa violantes persuadendo sibi dictum jeiunium et qua intentione ipsa fecerit.

Respondit: La Violante detta, in compagnia de Maria mi disse che facesse quel degiuno che saria stato salvatione dell'anima mia, et io haveria havuto bene.

Interrogatus si ei dixerit a quo huiusmodi jeiunium fuisse institutum, et qui servare soliti essent huiusmodi jeiunium, quia significaret.

Respondit: Non mi disse altrimenti da chi fosse istituto, et che era salvatione dell'anima mia, et che altri lo facevano, et me prometteva anco vita longa.

Interrogatus qui alii [servent] dictum jeiunium, et quos alios nominasset servare dictum jeiunium.

Respondit: Non mi diceva, et nominava le persone per expresso.

Interrogatus quid ipse responderit, et qua intentione consenserit huiusmodi jeunio.

Respondit: Quando lei mi propose questo, io resposi di gratia, et cossi lo fici con questa intentione d'havere bene.

Interrogatus an sciebat dictum jeiunium fuisse institutum ab ecclesia vel ab alio, et a quo.

Respondit: io voglio dire la verità, non sapeva che fosse istituito da la chiesa, et non pensai di far altro che di quello che detta dona mi disse

Interrogatus an publice jeiunaverit, et si alicui dixerit se jeiunasse.

Respondit: io non so si degiunasse pubblicamente, ne lo dissi a nessuna persona.

Interrogatus cuius qualitatis esset ille panis qui comedit, a quo confectus fuit, nec non ei traditus et quibus presentibus.

Respondit: Mi par di ricordar che quel pane era bianco, et era come fosse mezza palma de mano, et so che mi parse insipito, non che mi paresse amaro, et mi parve che fosse pane straordinario, senza crescito et pane azzimo. Et me lo diedi la Violante presente Maria, ma non so se allora se ci trovasse presente mia moglie, la quale so che lei ancora ne hebbi, et quando la Violante me diede quello pane mi disse mangia questo che sara salvatione dell'anima tua, et haverai prosperita. Et allora che me lo diede credo che non erano in tavola, si ben non me lo ricordo.

Interrogatus de quo tempore et qua parte anni dictum panem azzimum habuerit et comederit et qua intentione [fuisset] ei datum et qua intentione ipse...

Respondit: non mi ricordo bene il tempo ne di che parte dell'anno ne posso saper de che intentione me lo diede, et io lo pigliai et mangiai con intentione de haver bene, et di salvare l'anima mia, et non per infedeltà alcuna.

Interrogatus quomodo sciat quod eius uxor comederit de huiusmodi pane et quociens.

Respondit: io so che di quello medesimo tempo che ne fu dato a me, ne fu dato anco [in] avante o dapoi dale medesime donne a mia moglie et se io dico la verità contra di me devo dire la verita contra de altri, postea dixit: Non scriveti contra di me, ma dite che se dico la verità per me la dico anco per altri.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: Parve a me veramente che lei se lo mangiasse, è ben vero che lei mi disse, che li parse ancora insipido.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: Non ne mangiai altre volte, se non allora, dal che mi dispiace, et duole.

... habuerit de huiusmodi comestione azzimorum cum eius uxore...

Respondit: Allora che io lo mangiai, et che me ne confessai, et che lo confessore me ne riprese, io lo dissi a mia moglie che lo confessore me havea ditto che quello degiuno de settembre, et quel pane, era cosa mala che se ne guardasse, et lei mi rispose che non l'avesse fatto altrimenti.

Interrogatus quare confessus est [propter] ei confessori has cerimonias, et an confessor [illum] absolverit...

Respondit: Mi confessai per mio confessore ordinario et li dissi di quello degiuno de settembre, che non solo havea fatto li degiuni de la ecclesia ma questo de più, pensando meritare de più, et del pane semelmente che dicevano che quello fosse astinentia et

lo confessore me absolve, perche havea fatto ignoratamente senza infedeltà.

Interrogatus quis ei dixerit ut comederet panem azzimum fiet abstinentia.

Respondit: Me lo disse quella vecchia che mangiando detto pane facea abstinentia, et non posso indicar altro che per lo tristo gusto.

Interrogatus si per una vice putabat... abstinentia vel cogitaret sepe comedere.

Respondit: Io non pensai de far abstinentia con mangiar una volta sola, et se il confessore non me ne havesse ripreso, ne haveria mangiato li altri anni ancora, non pensando far peccato alcuno de infedeltà.

Et ei dicto quod animadvertat ad contrarietatem... dixerit se revelasse confessori comestionem azzimi tamquam fecisse abstinentia, et postea dicat contrarium.

Respondit: Io pensavo esser abstinentia a mangiarlo più volte, et havendo io questa intentione di mangiarne più volte ho ditto de essermi confessata come de abstinentia fatta, quando lo confessore non me ne havesse proibito.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: Non mi ricordo veramente del nome del confessore.

Interrogatus si sermonem habuit cum eius uxore de depositionibus alias factis.

Respondit: Lei ha detto a me de haver fatto depositione et io li ho detti anco haverla fatta io, ma in particolar non havemo ragionato molto.

Interrogatus an sciebat casum absolutionis huiusmodi fuisse reservatum sedi apostolice.

Respondit: Signor no, ne sapevo manco che questo fusse peccato, anzi [io] credeva che fosse cosa bona.

Et ad interrogationem dixit: Mi disse solamente, che era peccato, et che nol facesse più né che fusse peccato di religione, né mai ho... saputo che questo fosse peccato di religione.

Interrogatus cuius etatis esset tempore quo promissa fecit, et an unq. cum aliqua persona...

Respondit: Potea haver da quattordici in quindici anni, et non mi ricordo con chi ne possa haver parlato.

Interrogatus ut dicat si habeat aliquos inimicos, et quos.

Respondit: Ho per inimici tutta la casa Leone, la Sibia, casa Pellegrina, casa Cappelli, Conca, Savenales, Alexandro et la moglie Severina, et casa Catalana, perche son tutti una ceppa, et con questa

gente io non mi confaceva, la inimicicia che ho con li Leoni per una lite che hebbi con loro, de Alexandro... per denari che dovea haver da lui, con li Pellegrini perche son parenti de li Leoni, con la Sibilia perche è parente semelmente, et cia de Jacobo Leone per quanto dicono, et li Pellegrini son parenti restretti de la moglie del detto Jacobo et cossi li Cappelli, et lo Savanales, et mi remetto de più à quelli che havessero con me mala volontà.

*Interrogatus cur appellavit istas gentes.*

*Respondit:* Perché son tutti parenti et gente catalana, che cossì pubblicamente et comonemente si dicono esser catalani.

*Interrogatus quod reddat [rationem] vite sue a pueritia.*

*Respondit:* Mio patre si domandò Gaspere Cartiglia, et mio avo Francisco Cartiglia, ... quali intendo siano de Catalogna si ben mio patre credo nascesse in Francia, la matre mia fu Dianora de Antonia [andria] che intesi era di Francia... de la quale credo venessero da Catalogna, la causa perche li parenti partessero da Catalogna et Francia per venire in Napoli non la so, ma debbe esser per loro negotij ordinarij et io nacqui in Francia, in Avignone, et portato in Venetia, et da Venetia in Napoli che potea haver cinque anni et credo sia stato baptizzato, et crismato et fui allevato da mia matre fino a cinque annj et stetti in Venetia finchè mio patre morì, et venni in Napoli et ho atteso a mercantie de ogli, grano, et altre cose, et imparato de leger et scrivere, et non ho letto libri Catalani et non mi ricordo lo mastro da chi imparasse, et fù in Napoli alla scola che stava vicino la Sellaria, che lo mastro era un tal di Motula se non mi ricordo male. Et quando fui di età negociai mercantie, poi pigliai moglie havera da vintj dui in vinti tre anni incirca che allora stava alla Sellaria alle case che hogi sonno di messer Sigismondo de Pietro dove alloggiài con mio socero.

*Interrogatus qui essent soliti in eius domo cum eo habitari, et conversari.*

*Respondit:* Ce habitava in la medesima casa Rafaele Raguante mio socero, et Maria Cartiglia mia socera, et Violante Vitale stava all'appartamento di sopra, et nessuno altro ce stava, et ci conversava come parenti stretti li signori Geronimo et Pietro Beltrano, ce praticava ancora Giovan Paulo, et filio Cesar Ramo, et si visitavano le donne.

*Interrogatus quod nominet eius consanguineos, et affines.*

*Respondit:* Li mei parenti sonno che ho di sopra nominati et del casato mio non credo haver altri parenti, mia socera mi era parente la matre del signor Geronimo et Pietro Beltrani, chiamata la



signora Francisca Cartiglia, la signora Isabella Cartigliana, la signora Dianora Catalana, Violante Vitale, la signora Sabella Reguante, la signora Laudomia Raguante, la Severina Catalana, Beatrice, et Livia Fernandes, Diana, et Livia Reguante mi sonno parenti.

Interrogatus si habeat aliquos suspectos de hebraismo vel aliis pro suspectis intellexerit.

Respondit: De che si sonno suscitati questi romori, io son stato de opinione, che molte de queste persone, siano sospette de queste superstitioni che correno.

Interrogatus quod declaret que superstitiones sunt iste.

Respondit: Io non so, ne le posso dechiarare.

Et...

Respondit: Io hebbi per sospette molte persone che io scrissi, in quello mio scritto, tra l'altre Lavinia Petralbes, la Portia Bruno, la Severina Catalana, alcune de queste Pellegrine.

Interrogatus quod dicat unde sit orta causa suspicionis.

Respondit: Dala presa mi è nata, et perche a me me è venuta questa fantasia che queste habbiano qualche imperfectione, si bene non so altro perche non ho trattato con loro.

Interrogatus quod dicat an Violantes et Maria supradicte sibi fuerunt suspecte per Judaizantes vel saltem aliquando dubitaret.

Respondit: Havendome dato quel pane azzimo, hagio havuto sospetto che in loro non ci fosse quella bontà che si conviene, pero che non ci fosse cosa contra la fede.

Interrogatus a quanto tempore... habuerit hac suspectu.

Respondit: da che io me confessai la prima volta, che lo confessore mi disse, che non possea esser cosa bona.

Interrogatus quas famulas habuit a decem annis citra et de presenti habet.

Respondit: Io ho havuto una schiava si chiama Antonia quale è in casa mia, che c'è stata da vinti anni, et ho tenuto donne di compagne salariate che sono andate et venute che non mi ricordo loro nomi, tenni una schiavona se chiamava chiara, che sene andò in li anni passati che pono esser da dece anni, et hoggi non tengo altre serve che la detta antonia schiava negra.

Quibusque habitis stante tarditate hore dominus promotor dimisit prosecutionem examinis animo continuando et iniuncto ei silentio, et quod se subscribat.

Et antequam se subscriberet, dixit: Legitimi il mio examine

Et ei lecto de verbo ad verbum, dixit: al [interrogatorio] fattomi che dice una contrarietà che io ho risposto come appare per la mia

resposta mi occorre dicere, che saria abstinentia quando io l'havesse mangiato piu volte.

Francisco Cartiglia o deposto il soprascritto.

Et sic dominus mandavit ipsum poni in vinculis caute, prout positus fuit.

**5. Livia Fernandes' confession (ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 255r–260v)**

Die veneris que computatur XVI februarij 1571 Neapoli...ecclesiam Sancti Pauli Maioris...infrascripta depositio seu confessio consistens in paginis seu cartis numero sex scriptis, incipiens Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Signor havendo io livia fernandes, et finiente: Ma dimitte fuochi...proprie manus dicte Livie dictante, Io livia fernandes ho fatto scrivere la presente, et l'ho sottoscripta de mia mano accetto quanto in essa se contiene; presentata et exhibitata fuit per dictam Angelam Fernandes coram Reverendo domino Hieronimo Ferro preposito ecclesie sancti pauli maioris, et petente in actis conservari...

Havend'io Livia Fernandes al tempo quando per la corte archiepiscopale di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima fu proceduta contra alcune donne della nation catalana per haver servato alcuni riti et cerimonie giudaiche venuta in cognitione di mio errore, nel quale molti anni ero stata [incorsa] per haverne anch'io osservato alcuni, Et desiderando col lasciare la strada delle tenebre, e dell'errori nella quale dalle false persuasioni di che acciò fare sotto colore di maggior bene era stata tirata per ridursi alla vera via del nostro Signor Jesu Christo, così a quelli remedi, che dalla comune Madre, cioè l'Ecclesia Cattolica [s'offriscono] con haver in mano del molto Reverendo Vicario di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima e del Padre Giovan Battista Buoncuore manifestato le mie sciocchezze, e da quello ottenuto l'assolutione e penitenza doppo già pochi giorni sono, essendo di novo chiamata [avanti] di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima subito come figliuola d'obedienza venni, et in sua presenza fu esaminata. Et [tanto] la prima quanto la seconda volta sempre fu di mia intentione...tutti li secreti del mio cuore. Non dimeno perche nel principio non fui con esatta diligenza esaminata, et ero anco piena di pagura, ...per esser pentita di cose per fare quell'effetto la sera di notte senza saputo di mio marito, oltre che non eran passati piu che quattro o cinque giorni ch'era [partorita]. Et ultimamente ridotta alla presenza di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima per cose tanto importanti fui tutta ripiena di confusione, e spavento, non mi mancando il medesimo timore che il fatto non si facesse palese, del che ...ne può nascere l'ultimo mio...Ho

riconosciuto dopo dove spero quel spatio di tempo a revoltar la terra del mio cuore, che la mia altra essamina è stata imperfetta. Per il che desiderando (come ho detto) di purgare le piu segrete parti del cuore di così venerata doctrina, vengo à buttarmi ai piedi di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima con supplicarla con lacrime di sangue per quel sangue [di] quel pretioso [santo] del quale lei tiene il luogho...abbracciar questa povera anima, e come vero pastore, revocandola da mani dei lupi red-durla nel gregge dal Signore commessoli. Et acciò di novo da confusione e spavento non sia impedita quanto ho nel cuore. Vengo a far questo [atto] con la presente sottoscritta di mia mano.

Et accio Vostra Signoria Illustrissima saprà l'origine del mio errore, le dico che si ben'io sono nata da padre e madre christiani e catholici, essendo uno nato in Cordua, et l'altra in Siviglia, fui nondimeno nelli teneri anni della mia fanciullezza (essendo da circa dieci anni) da mia madre data ad allevare ad una mia zia chiamata Biancha del Castiglio, quale per quel'intendeva dire era apparentata et allevata tra cathalani. Et si ben stava nelle medesime case di mio padre, e madre, viveva non di meno del tutto appartata dal loro, massimo circa il suo vitto, standosene nella sua camera nella qual'io il piu delle volte dimorava etiam di notte. In quel tempo da questa Biancha di nome, si ben assai nera d'effetti, mi fu persuaso di dover diggiunare un giorno ogn'anno circa la fine di settimana con darmi ad intendere ch'essendo questo diggiuno istituto da Dio, et anchora osservato da Christo signor nostro, qual non era venuto per destruere, ma piu presto per adempire la legge vecchia, et osservato anco dalla sua Madre santissima era cosa di grande importanza. Et chi l'osservava oltre la salute doveva sperarne dell'anima per la remissione di peccati. Era anco certa di havere in q.a della prosperità, massime di dover essere ben collocata in matrimonio. Al che non fui presto resistente a dar fede...qualità di quella vecchia quale dimostrava doverglisi haver ogni credito, si anche per le larghe promesse mi faceva Credo bene che alcune volte essendo figliuola nascosta da lei avesse per il giorno mangiato senza havere osservato quella strettezza di deggiuno, che Lei ordinava. Avvenga che...in quel giorno non si mangiasse cosa...fino alla sera et allora si ben fosse stato di dominica mangiare cibi quadragesimali. In quel giorno non permetteva, che facesse essercitio alcuno de fatiche corporali benché di questo volentieri la serviva essendo natura di figliuoli il fuggire quanto può il lavorare. Ordinava ancho che in quel giorno s'attendesse all'oratione con dire degli psalmi di David si ben proibiva che non si dicessero che non si dicessero psalmi di laude ne cantici con dire che per essere quel giorno deputato per mortificatione della carne non conveniva a dire tali psalmi. Voleva anche, e così vedevo

osservar da lei, un'oratione in piedi con stare con la finestra aperta, e guardare verso il cielo. E si ben nella sua camera v'era una figura credo della madonna avanti la qual'io alcuna volta solevo ingenochiarmi, e dire qualche oratione. Non essendomi stato da Lei che io face proibito. Non di meno quella figura lei il piu delle volte teneva con la faccia rivolta al muro, si ben dicesse farlo per maggior riverenza, come credo haver detto nell'altra mia essamina. Quale in ciò fosse la sua intentione non posso saperlo per non haverlo investigato, ne tam poco (come ho detto) mai da lei mi fu proibita l'adoration dell'immagine, delle quali dall'appartamento di mia madre ve n'era assai piu d'una. Nel dire de psalmi mi diceva e così osservai il piu delle volte sin'a quel tempo che fui sotto il suo governo per spatio di quattro in cinque anni, che bastava dire Gloria patri, senza aggiongervi... et filio, et spiritu sanctu. Questo anco con che intentione il dicesse tam poco posso saperlo per non havermi mai dimandato raggione, e come ho detto l'età fanciullescha e il credito haveva à quella vechia, mi quietavano l'anima di non investigar l'altro. E ben vero che doppò lei morse vedendo così osservare al resto de Christiani nol'ho lasciato d'aggiungere doppo il Gloria patri ancora, et filio, et spiritu sanctu. E da quello ho possuto congetturare mi pare l'intention sua fosse pessima, poi che col tacere il nome del figlio, et del spirito santo, da suspectione, che lei non perfettamente ci credesse. Al che tanto piu hora (che mercé della gratia del nostro signore) mi vedo fuori di tante tenebre. Ma [circa] inchinando quanto che mi riduco à mente, che lei era solita à dire, che bisognava amare, adorare, e revirir Iddio, qual'era onnipotente, haveria creato il cielo, la terra, e il mondo tutto, e che la sua onnipotenza era tale, che posseva mandare il figliuolo, et il Spirito Santo. E perche non scendeva poi al particolare si veramente il figliuolo era incarnato, e nato di Maria Vergine Santissima per operation del Spirito Santo sicome la Santa Chiesa Catholica tiene, et io non dubito. Però come ho detto ho suspetta l'intention della detta Biancha ma essendo Io figliuola non havendo cercato d'investigare questi secreti, non mi resta scrupolo di haver in questo principalissimo articolo commesso volontariamente errore alcuno, si ben così in generale per la reverenza, e credito haveva à quella maledetta vechia, mi pareva che a tener il contrario havria possuto errare. Quello m'ha dato, e da intorno a questo articolo secreta pace di coscienza. Si è, ch'essendo battezzata, e cresmata, et havuto sempre intention di vivere, e morire christiana, quantunque sciocchamente havesse dato credito alla Bianca e per sua persuasione errato nell'osservanza di questo o d'altri riti giudaici come dirò appresso, ma per occasione de suoi persuasioni, ne per osservanza di qualche voglia superstitione o cerimonia ho lasciato d'haver

quella certezza di fede, almeno generale, che come christiana sono obbligata. Et in segno di ciò mai ho lasciata la confessione e comunione piu di una volta l'anno etiam dio al tempo stava sotto 'l suo governo, con havere spessissime volte massime nelle feste ascoltato le messe, e nell'entrar in chiesa, tanto nel pigliar dell'acqua benedetta, quanto infinite altre occasioni etiam fuori di chiesa spessissime volte segnatomi al fronte, el petto, e la bocca col segno della santissima croce, et infinite volte per ogni occorrenza invocato il nome e il aiuto... Questo modo di diggiunare et orare lo osservai per quel spatio di tempo di anni quattro in circa, che visse la sovrannominata Biancha. Doppo essend'io collocata in matrimonio con un gentihuomo spagnolo chiamato Francisco Guerrera, et con lui andato al Castello di Mola della provincia di Terra di Bari, del quale detto mio marito teneva governo. Dove dimorai seco per spatio d'anni cinque incirca. Lasciai in quel tempo il deggiuno di settembre, non già perche lo riputasse cosa mala, ma per non haver havuto chi m'havesse notificato il giorno, che doveva farsi, essendo che non veniva mai in una giornata del mese. A quel tempo, ch'io dimorai in Mola capitolino nel detto Castello alcuni giudei, quali eran stati presi d'una pista di Christiani e da loro molto maltrattato... furono colle loro robbe rinvenuti dal detto mio marito, sotto pretesto che toccasse a lui come castellano. Dal che nacque controversie e dispiacere tra lui e l'illustre signor Marchese di... Maggiore quale allhora si ritrovava governatore di quella provincia. Ma al fine la differenza fra loro sendo sopita, il detto mio marito hebbe dal detto marchese due pezze di panno... il quale panno essendo capitato in mano mia lo ritrovai dentro duo libri [uno] grande coverto di rosso, il quale era il Genesis, et un piccolo coverto di nero, nel quale eran dentro psalmi di David, e molte altre orationi. Del primo non lo retenni molto santo, anzi lo lasicai dentro casa, che ogn'uno el vedeva e così stette sin'a tanto che mio marito lo bruggiò parendogli che fosse proibito per il Concilio Tridentino. Et questo testo manco m'era charo quanto ch'era scritto in lingua portoghese, ch'io non bene l'intendeva. L'altro piccolo per quell'orationi e psalmi m'era piu charo, et lo tenni sempre ben guardato con mostrarlo a pochi. Ben mi ricordo haver dato copia d'alcune di quell'orationi a Gerolama Pelegrina per havermi domandato, come credo haver detto ad una mia essamina. Questo libro lo retenni sin'a tanto ne nacque quel romore delle donne pigliate preggioni per occasione del quale dubitando che quello v'era dentro non fosse cosa mala lo diedi ad Alonso Pelegrino, che lo butasse in una [chiaricca]. Dall'istessa Biancha per quel tempo che foi seco al tempo della settimana santa in circa mi teneva dato al quanto di pan azzimo, e questo la sera à tardi con darmi anco a mangiare delle

lattuche amare, e darne ad intendere, che questa osservanza e cerimonia era parimente...all'anima e per casto segno della Pasqua. Questi azzimi nol'ho fatto nel'ho voluto fare ad altri. Credo bene che la Biancha facesse lei havendo nella sua camera sempre della farina e'l fuoco et spesse volte si stava colla...Nel sabbato soleva dire ch'era bene a non lavorare, non posso però giudicare quale fosse la sua intentione si ben dava ad intendermi che dovesse riverirle in honore della Madonna di Pedigrotta, e benche persuadere a figliuole, che s'astengan da lavorare è assai facil cosa, tanto piu quanto se gli persuade sotto spetie di divotione; Nondimeno non restava il sabato di far molti serviggij minimi che corrono per casa, et particolarmente doppo, che sono uscita dalle sue mani, havendo fatto in tal giorno il pane, et molti altri serviggi, facilitava anco il dargli credito vedere, che universalmente in Bitonto (dove all'hora habitava) la maggior parte delle donne il Sabato per honore della Madonna s'astengan da molti serviggi non stavan all'intutto in otio.

Nel mangiare Biancha era fastidiosissima, poiche di molte cose s'asteneva e tampoco in questo posso far giudizio quale fosse stata la sua intentione poiche mai mi scoverse l'animo suo. È ben vero che essendo anch'io assai schiva nel mangiare, ne soffrendomi il stomaco di mangiar cose grasse tampoco selvagine, col haverne anco usata collei, mi sono astenuta di molte cose senza però haver havuto mai intentione di giudicare. Del che posso fare fede (sicome dissi nell'altra mia essamina), pur che il presutto non sia stato molto grasso non ho lasciato, ne lascio di mangiarlo. E si ben nell'ammazzar de polli avesse usato ad dire, o far dire alcune parole in laude di Dio, come à creator del tutto imparatomi dalla detta Biancha, et ancho havuto piacere s'ammazzassero talmente che non uscisse tutto il sangue, acciò che fossero più bianchi. Non fu però mai di mia intentione tampoco in questo di giudicare, ne ho havuto intentione di far cosa contro la vera legge di Christo. Non lasciarò ancho di dire d'haver deggiunato il lunedì, e benche dalla Biancha mi fosse stato imparato di farlo in honore di Santa Catherina, et all'hora non avesse havuto altra intentione, nondimeno [vo] suspicando, che sotto questo colore vi fosse coverta qualche altra osservanza non costumata da Christiani catholici tanto più, quanto, che a suggestione e persuasione non solamente della Biancha, ma della sopranominata Gerolama Pelegrina a certi tempi osservava alcuni altri deggiuni, e solennizzava alcuni giorni di festa, delli quali non sappia darvi ragione, né distinguere li tempi per non haverne cognitione sua, quando haveva da fargli, e spettava, che ne fosse stata avvisata o dalla detta Biancha o dalla sovradetta nominata Gerolama. Aggiungo di più haver imparato



dalla sovradetta, et osservato un'altra superstitione, che al tempo dovea farsi il..., ovvero solenizzare alcuna festa. Bisognava quanto era possibile procurare l'esteriori monditie del corpo, e particolarmente il giorno avanti del digiuno lavarsi la testa. E questi deggiuni, e feste si ben cercava di farli occulti, e non palesi. Non dimeno il lunedì, non curava di nascondarlo poiche ci era il calore di farsi in riverenza di Santa Caterina.

Doppo partita dal Castello di Mola, avennuta in Napoli il deggiuno di Settembre, et altri quali per non haver havuto da chi intendere nel tempo...

Retornai a ripiglarlo, e l'ho osservata sin'al tempo che nacque questo romore delle donne

Prigione...

Doppo in processo di tempo cominciai ad haver pratica, benché non molto stretta colle donne della Nation Cathalana colle quali alle volte si ragionava così del deggiuno grandi di Settembre, ... et anco delli azzimi e dell'osservanza dell'altre feste con esser avvisata del tempo del deggiuno da alcune di esse. Et quel mi ricordo della già detta Girolama Pellegrina e da Beatrice mia sorella.

Per trattare o ragionare de simili cose e superstitioni non mi ricordo esserci ragunati insieme, ne a certo loco, ne a certo tempo, ma solamente secondo l'occasioni di visitare l'una l'altra nasceva ragionamento, qual'haveva principio hora d'una, hora d'un'altra. In questo tempo che sono stata in Napoli, non posso ridurmi a memoria d'haver mangiato dell'azzimi se non una volta sola essendo [impartito] nella settimana santa, che me le diede una mia zia chiamata Catherina Fernandes, ovvero Pelegrina Che havesse lasciato di mangiarne negli altri anni, non è stato per schivarse, ne reputarsi cosa mala, ma per non esserci stata occasione che mi fossero stati offerti. Imperoche se mi fossero stati dati non haveria lasciato di mangiarli....

Non pensava però di fare cosa contraria alla vera legge di Christo, anzi per quello m'era stato imparato dalla detta Biancha, e dall'altri teneva di fermo di meritare apresso d'Iddio assai piu di quelle che ciò non facevano. Poiche pareva s'attendessi ad atti di devotione, et coll'osservanza delli deggiuni se colorava la maceratione della carne. Et in questa opinione mi pare che eran tutte quelle colle qual'io (com'ho detto) ne trattava reputandosi meglio serva di Christo quella, che più fedelmente l'osservava, e quella ch'era istruita in sempre dare ragione, et haver cognitione de li tempi, nelli quali queste cerimonie dovessero osservarsi. Colorando sempre quello si faceva con dire, ch'era bene, poiche l'haveva osservato anchora Christo, el quale non era venuto per distruggere, ma più presto per adempire la legge....

Et si ben per salute dell'anima, e sodisfar in qualche minima parte l'offesa fatta al mio redentore, poco sarrà qualsivoglia penitenza pur pubblica che fusse. Nondimeno [metto] alli suoi pretiosissimi piedi, con supplicarla con amarissime lagrime, che lasciando da parte il [merito] particolare della mia persona. Voglia haver riguardo a la reputation di sette poveri figliuoli, et assai più à quella del mio marito, quale retrovandosi in qualche reputatione apresso la Maestà del Rè Catholico al qual'ha servito, e serve per Capitano di Fanteria all'impresa di Granata dove sta continuamente ad esponersi a pericolo della vita per servitio della fe Christiana, e del suo Re....

**6. Beatrice Fernandes' confession (ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 174r–178r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Signor

Die quarto februarij 1571 Neapoli et in domo Magnifici Cesaris Reguante... doctoris In qua fuit examinata Violantes Raguant in forma in lecto jacens, presens infrascripta depositio incipiens Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Signor Io Beatrice Fernandes etc. et finit ma non già per malitia, cum... proprie manus dicte beatrix... Io Beatrice Fernandes ho fatto scrivere la presente per mano del signor Cesare Raguant mio marito et affirmo quanto in essa se contiene. Presentata, exhibita, et producta fuit per dictam beatricem in manibusque Reverendi Domini Petri Dusine locumtenentis illustrissimi domini archiepiscopi neapolitani... cum instantia in actis conservatis.

Io Beatrice Fernandes serva di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima con lacrime et vera contritione di cuore li fo intendere qualmente l'anno passato per occasione del rumore nacque in napoli che molte donne dela natione catalana erano state carcerate sotto pretesto che havessero osservato alcuni riti et cerimonie giudaiche tocca dal rimorso della conscientia sentendomi anchor io aviluppata in tal errore per haver dato piu che dovea fede a chi m'havia persuaso ch'losservanza d'alcune di quelle cerimonie era molto giovevole alla salute dell'anima et remissione di peccati mi mossi a rivelare il mio errore al molto reverendo signor vicario de Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et al reverendo padre Buoncuore come può vedersi per la mia abiuratione allhora fatta, nella quale si no fu detto quanto era necessario ne tampoco quella fatta diligente et exacta discussione della mia conscientia como in caso di tanta importanza si ricercava certificato a vostra signoria illustrissima con ogni verità che non fu lasciato per malizia ma per non ricordarmi allhora altre particolarità oltra di quelle che furno dette o per non esser stata cossì minutamente dimandata di quanto bisognava. Ultimamente essendo pochi jorni sono

stata chiamata avanti di vostra signoria illustrissima et con ogni dilingentia examinata delle mie sciocchezze credo di fermo di non haver sotisfatto a quanto dovea. Et questo como già di sopra ho detto non per malitia ne per volunta di ritener cosa veruna che con si salutifera confessione non vomitasse, ma solo per confusione nasciutami dal veder mi per così abominevol causa avanti il tribunal de vostra signoria illustrissima ridotta, et ancho dal'ordinaria mia smemoragine causatami dalle mie continue infirmità per il che desiderando quanto sia possibile proveder alla salute di questa povera anima merce della bontà del mio cuore conoscendo doverla haver tanto chara per esser ricomperata col sangue del mio christo nostro signore ritorno a buttarmi ai piedi di vostra signoria illustrissima como quello che in questo particular tiene il luoco del mio dolce jesu con desiderio de aprire tutti li secreti del mio cuore et mostrarli la bruttezza et [monditia] delle piaghe della misera anima mia accio como vero medico possa applicarvj quel salutifero medicamento che li pareva conveniente certificandola che per niuno rispetto humano lasciaro de dir quanto mi viene in memoria promptissima ancho de risponder a quanto vostra signoria illustrissima si degnara dimandarmj pensando ch io sia manchata de dire, apparecchiata poi a sottomettermi del tutto alla pietosissima sua correctione con abbracciare allegramente tutta quella salutifera penitenza che si degnara impormi tanto più prontamente quanto dal mio signore pietosissimo sarò illuminata che non è penitenza ne confusione ne vituperio cossi grave ch io non meriti per le mie sciocchezze, non restaro pero di supplicarla per le viscere dela piete del mio signore Jesu Christo posto da parte ogni mio rispetto si degni mirar alla riputatione et honore del mio marito et al bisogno deli figli poveri maxime de una che sta per collocarsi. Et questo dico affine che siben la penitenza hara de impormi del mio errore sia quanto si vuol greve et dura non sono per rifiutarla, desidero nondimeno che sia secreta poiche ogni volta che fussi publica sarebbe per uscirne tanta ruina che maggiore non sapria immaginarla et potria l'inimico del humana generatione avalersene per instrumento dela ruina di più d'una anima con poco guadagno della mia, il che so certa che non è intentione et fine di vostra signoria illustrissima. Dico dunque che circumscrivendo le due prime confessioni como fatte con poco prudentia et manco diligente examine della propria conscientia et con offuscatione di mente per li respecti già detti di sopra ch'io mi conosco haver offeso il mio pietosissimo signore principalmente per havere come ho detto piu che dovea dato credito acchi mi tirava alla via della perditione della quale la prima fu una mia cia, chiamata Biancha dalla quale essendo in puglia a bitonto dove seco dimoraj per dui anni incirca imparaj dovere osservare

il digiuno di settembre cerimonia veramente judaica et dela legge vecchia et questo era il decimo jorno dopo la luna di settembre in quel jorno mangiava di magro una volta sola, et questo la sera a tardi ne intal jorno faceva exercitio manuale dispensando quel jorno in alcune orationi nelle quali non me rimorde la coscienza de haver offeso in altro sino che dicendo di molti psalmi lasciava quelli psalmi quali chiamano cantici o laudi per essere quel jorno piu presto deputato a mortificatione della carne che non a cantici di allegrezza, et siben non me ricordo mai per occasione di queste superstitioni di haver lasciato a tempi debiti la mia confessione et comunione havea nondimeno dato credito a quello che dalla detta mia cia me era stato imparato, che essendo questo digiuno di tanta importanza fra li altri effetti che si faceva, si era che in quel giorno Idio mandava l'angelo a remunerar li digiunati con scancellare dal libro tutti li peccati che si erano fatti in questa vita. Questo digiuno cominciava ad osservare al modo ho detto di sopra et per ammaestramento della detta mia cia insino al tempo ch'io era da circa xii anni et l'ho cossì continuato insino al settembre delanno 69 che poco dopo successe questo rumore delle donne preggione senza pero aggiungervi altra superstitione di quelle ho detto quanto dopo haver ben examinata la mia coscienza posso ricordarmj: Aggiungo di più che alle volte accascando quel jorno etiam dio in domenica non lasciava però di far il solito digiuno forzandomi di coprirlo et nascondarlo tanto de mio marito como dal resto della famiglia con diverse excusatione. Il che m'era facilissimo per tener Io il governo dela casa, quanto tocca poi all'osservanza dela festa di sabato dico a vostra signoria illustrissima con ogni verità che di questo non ho rimorso altro di coscienza non havendo havuto maj animo ne intentione di osservar in quel jorno niuno rito ne cerimonia judaica et siben (como credo haver detto nella mia dipositione) in tal jorno maxime [deponeva] Io lasciava di far opere servili et dalla matina insino a nona tampoco me occupava a filar o fare altri exercitij da qual potesse cavar guadagno. Non restava però di far ogni altra cosa fussi bisogno per servitio de la casa et governo de miei figlioli et maxime che il più delle volte solea como ancho soglio far il pane et questa osservanza di devotione lo faceva solo per devotione dela madre de Idio tanto più quanto che il medesimo vedeva observar, et si observa dalle donne di Bitonto dove io sono allevata sin da fanciulla: di questa osservanza del sabbato non posso riddurmi a mente che da quella mia cia biancha mi fussi stato detto casa, [aia] forse perchè il spatio di tempo che fu seco fu breve et io era di éta assai tenera overo perché essendo io figliola con bona... occasione volentieri in quel jorno schivava di lavorar [o per] attender a vanità de figliole io, per confermar m j colla questione

dele altre donne di quella città questo ben torno a replicar che mai fu mia intentione di far cosa diversa ne contraria al costume de christiani: ne tampoco da niuna della natione catalana circa questa osservanza dal sabbato m'e stato detto cosa alcuna, eccetto una sola volta che in tal jorno venne [qui] in napoli in casa mia dianora catalana qual ritrovan-domj che io stava facendo il pane monstro di cio grandissimo sdegno et me riprese con direme che faceva male essendo il sabato a far il pane ma con tutto czio poco curando del suo sdegno sempre ho continuato a far il midesmo ne maj, imbrattato l'intentione con osservanza de rito o cerimonia Judaicha circa questo particolare:

Nel mangiar tampoco ho rimorso alcuno de haver osservato ne rito ne cerimonia Judaicha poiche sempre ho costumato et costume di mangiar indifferentemente qualsivoglia cosa ch'dio ha creato per uso et vitto del'homo tanto di carne como di pesce cossi di mare como de fiumj cossi di animali terrestri como volatili senza che nel amazzar de animali cossi terrestri como volatili habia osservato cerimonia o superstitione altra. Quanto tocca poi al fare o mangiare de pani azimi al tempo dela pascha secondo il [computo] fano li hebrei dico a vostra signoria illustrissima con ogni verità chiamando in cio Idio in testimonio che mai in mia vita ho fatto tal pane ne sapria dire quando viene la pascha secondo il [computo] di hebrei ne tampoco quello significano quelli azimi. È ben vero che per quello ho possuto dopoi molti pensieri riddurmi a mente mi par ricordar che per quel tempo che io stetti in Bitonto dopoi che vene in casa la supranominata bianca mia cia che non fu piu che per spatio di uno anno et mezzo incirca nel qual vi capitò una pascha della detta Bianca mi furno dati di quelli pani azimi quali credo che la stessa Bianca l'haveva tutti nella sua camera nella quale teneva della farina [et] il fuoco benche lo non cel'havessi visti fare per stare quasi sempre cola porta serrata et di quelli mangiai senza molto investigar quello significassero si ben per la fede teneva a quella vecchia li mangiava per cosa bona che potesse apportar salute ancho alla anima. Partita poi de Bitonto per il tempo fui col mio predetto marito mai n'ho mangiato et questo perche non mi è venuta occasione di haverne. Perche se me fossero stati offerti con la credenza che tenea di non far male ma più presto bene n'haria ancora mangiato. Per il tempo poi che so stata casata con questo marito che hora tengo per quanto posso ricordarmj non credo haverne mangiato piu che due volte una che sono circa 4 anni che stando [in parto] mia sorella Livia nella settimana santa me ne diede una severina catalana qual stava in uno appartamento della mia casa che lei senza – et tanto dalla detta Catherina como dalla Severina mi veniva detto questo esser cosa assaj bona et per un certo segno della Pascha.

Questo è Monsignor Mio Illustrissimo quel tanto che dopo molto havere investigato li secreti del mio cuore con la debilissima mia memoria ho possuto ridurmj a mente di haver colpato circa queste osservantie et riti judaichi. Et questo maj ho fatto ne pensato di fare in dispregio della vera fede christiana quale ho sempre tenuto et tengo et per la quale sono apparecchiata mille volte morire: ma solamente l'ho fatto penzandomi di fare bene et credendo ancho che da cio fare non solo contraheva colpa veruna di peccato ma acquistava non poco merito appresso Idio. Si ben non tacero de dire che tutto cio ho fatto con tal arte che non havia [per bene] che altri che non fusse de la nazione il sapesse. Et questo perche vedendo che li altri che non erano de la nazione ne nissuno huomo dela nazione lo faceva dubitava di non darli scandolo si ben pensava che per far lo questo più deli altri christianj tanto piu meritassi appresso di dio et che a far luno et l'altro non vi fussi prohibitione ma merito: non havendo per occasione di questa superstitione o cerimonie lasciato mai di far tutto quello fanno li altri christianj cossi di digiunj a tempi comandati de la santa chiesa como di confessioni et comunionj piu volte lo anno vedere messe piglar jubilei et altre opere de christiani et principalmente con havermi segnato il fronte et il pecto tanto in chiesa al tempo che pigliava delacqua benedecta como in casa per infinite occasioni contra lucifero segno della santa croce havendo sempre tenuto como hora tengo in più luochi della mia casa con ogni debita reverenza l'immagini tanto di christo nostro signore como dela madre santissima et de altri santi non havendo mai lasciato di dire benche freddamente et indevotamente como peccatrice la corona et offitio dela madona si ben per non intender il latino ho havuto piacere dirlo in lingua spagnola con haver ancho letto diversi libri spirituali como et gioan gersone le opere di fra luisi di granata et molti altri de libri poi nelle quali si contenesse qualche rito o osservanza de hebrej mai ne ho tenuto ne visti eccetto che una volta in puglia ...ne veddi uno grande coperto di rosso quale era de mia sorella livia et vedendolo l'apersi et trovai che era il genesis lo cominciai a legger ma como ch'era in lengua portughese che non bene lo intendeva lo lasciai stare ne più l'ho visto. Nel dire l'offitio di psalmj etiam al tempo che faceva il digiuno di settembre se non ho detto nel fine... patri filio etc. como usano tutti veri christianj havendo anchora col cuor creduto si como credo nella santissima trinità padre figlio et spiritu santo et che per lo advenimento del vero messia christo nostro signore siano consumate tutte le figure del vecchio testamento et la perfectione consiste nel evangelio et si ben como ho detto osservava altre di quelle cerimonie della vecchia legge lo faceva per haver scioccamente dato credito a chi non dovea et tanto piu m'assicurava a farlo quanto che pensava di non offender ne



Idio ne far pregiuditio alla legge evangelica ma piu presto como tante volte ho detto pensando de meritarne appresso iddio. Si Vostra Signoria Illustrissima desidera saper chi sono quelle persone cole quali Io altre volte ho ragionato delle cose ditte di sopra dico del digiuno et dico per total discarico della mia conscientia che quelle che di cio hanno meco ragionato sono la sopranominata Biancha, Severina Catelana, Dianora Catelana, Angela Concha sua nora, Geronima Pellegrina et sua sorella Caterina Pellegrina, Vittoria Pellegrina, Dianora Corviglia, Livia, Diana, et Violante Raguantes mie cugate, Livia Fernandes mia sorella et Laura Corviglia. Potria ancho esser che ne havesse tractato con altre ma certificato a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima con ogni certezza di verità che non posso ricordarmene di più ma ricordandomj non restarò de dirli como ancho farò ogni volta che mi ricordi de alcuna altra particolarità che havesse osservato in simile superstitione quale per tenere poca memoria potria haver lasciato de dire ma non già per malitia.

Io Beatrice Fernandes o fato scrivere la perescritta per mano di signor Cesere Regante mio marito e afermo quanto in esa si contene.

## II. Letters

### 7. Mario Carafa to Cardinal Scipione Rebiba, 22 May 1573 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 41)

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Monsignor padron mio osservandissimo

Ho ricevuta la lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima delli xvi dell'istante mese, con la quale mi manda due memoriali, l'uno di Lavinia Petralbes et Portia Bronda, e l'altra del monasterio della Consolatione, presentati a cotesto Sant'Officio. Onde, havendoli molto ben considerati, dico a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che queste donne furono condannate che si murassero: il che io volendo mandare in essequitione, Monsignor Illustrissimo di Granvela mi fece intendere che di questa muratione ne nasceva gran scandolo al popolo, ma che si soprasedesse fin tanto che se ne havesse dato avviso a cotesta Illustrissima Congregatione, sì come egli fece. Et io ricevei ordine delle Signorie Vostre Illustrissime, costoro non si morassero altramente, ma qui stessero carcerate, dove son state e stanno per spatio di quattro anni da che fu cominciata lor causa. Quando fui io ultimamente costì, feci intendere di più alle Signorie Vostre Illustrissime che queste carcere non erano conveniente per tenere dette donne lungamente et che si provedesse dove havrebbero a stare, et le nominai quel luogo delli incurabili di che restano servite; ma ritrovandose detto luoco molto pieno, non ci è stato garbo di posservele accomodare. Onde, poi che

le Signorie vostre Illustrissime mi commandano ch'io [rescriva] quel che mi pare che si possa fare, io giudicherei che fosse ben fatto che costoro s'abilitassero con iddonea pleggiaria alle lor case, perciò che è verissimo che la detta Lavinia ha tre figli mascoli carcerati in Vicaria et una figliola zita rimasta sola in casa, la quale veramente potria portare pericolo di capitare male, et nel medesimo stato sta un'altra figlia della detta Portia. Però se le Signorie Vostre Illustrissime restano servite conceder loro questa gratia, ne nascerebbe che con le elemosine che queste donarebbero se ne faria beneficio al detto monasterio della Consolatione, le quali veramente hanno dato molto fastidio le loro figlie insieme con le altre di questa setta, mentre sono state in detto luoco, il quale ha grandemente bisogno di essere aiutato per finire quella chiesiola che si trova incominciata, alla quale io ho fatto dare da queste donne che sono spedite et da altre pene di questa corte molti quatrini, sì come vederanno per notamento qui inchiuso. Laonde questo è quanto m'occorre in risposta della lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et per dichiarazione delli memoriali che m'ha mandate; tutta vostra rimettendomi al prudentissimo parere delle Signorie Vostre Illustrissime non dirò altro, se non che à Vostra Signoria Illustrissima bacio reverentemente la mano et da Nostro Signor Dio prego ogni felicità Di Napoli a xviii di Maggio Mdlxxiii

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima,  
servitore obligatissimo  
Mario Arcivescovo di Napoli

**8. Mario Carafa to Cardinal Scipione Rebiba, 5 June 1573 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 12)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Monsignor padron mio osservandissimo

Per la lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima delli 29 del passato mi comanda ch'io debba far ordine al padre don Ignatio che non si parti da qui infino à nuovo avviso da lei, il che ho subito fatto intender al padre Abbate di Monte Oliveto, che così faccia; et del giovane dell'Amantia si eseguerà conforme all'ordine da Vostra Signoria Illustrissima venutomi. In quant'al memoriale della Angela di Leone mandatomi da lei, l'ho molto ben considerato, et è vero quant'ha esposto: ma perche costei è stata inquisita et condannata, sì come furon la Lavinia Fonseca et Portia Bronda, delle quali per l'altro ordinario pienamente donai ragguaglio a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di quel che era passato, et mi pareva convenire per servitio di Dio e della giustitia, il medesimo dico della detta Angela, aggiungendo che queste carcere non sono conveniente

per tenere donne. Et habbilitarle in casa loro con iddonea pleggiaria ne nasceria che delle elemosini che si poriano cavare da queste se ne sovveneria li monasterij de Santa Maria della Consolatione et di Santa Maria delli Angeli, alli quali esse con loro figlie hanno dato molto fastidio, et in vero hanno bisogno di soccorso per la gran neccesità che tieneno, pur rimettendomi sempre al prudentissimo giuditio delle Signorie Vostre Illustrissime. A lei bascio riverentemente le mani et da Nostro Signor Dio le prego ogni felicità. Di Napoli a quinto di Giugno Mdlxxiii.

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima  
Servitore obligatissimo,  
Mario Arcivescovo di Napoli

**9. Mario Carafa to Cardinal Rebiba, 3 July 1573 (ACDE, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 44)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Monsignor padron mio osservandissimo

Li giorni passati scrissi a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima dandoli conto di quel che mi pareva che per servitio di Dio et della giusticia si facesse di queste donne, che si tieneno qui carcerate, venendomi così con mandato da lei in nome di cotesto Sant'Ufficio: et per che non ho havuto fin qua risposta di quel che si debba essequire, et vedendo che queste non son carceri convenienti per donne, et che potrebbero servire per altri di più importanza, et che dell'elemosina che da queste s'havrebbe se ne potria giovare a qualche monasterio, supplico per tanto Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che si degni di far risolvere che debba fare et avisarmi, acciò conforme al suo ordine possa farlo essequire. Né questa essendo per altro, a V.S.Illma bascio la mano et da Nostro Signore Dio le prego ogni essaltatione. Di Napoli a iiii di luglio 1573

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima,  
servitore obligatissimo  
Mario Arcivescovo di Napoli

**10. Pietro Antonio Vicedomini to Cardinal Scipione Rebiba, August 6, 1574 (HH 2-a, f. 116r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo signor mio colendissimo

Per quello che ho trattato e veduto io dopo la mia venuta in Napoli, non posso se non dire che sia molto lontana dal vero la relatione fatta a cotesto Santo Offitio di questo tribunale, perché qua non s'è composta in tempo mio alcuna causa di persona heretica o che havesse punto dependentia dalla heresia, né so immaginarmi qual modo si potesse tenere

per comporre cause tali senza saputa mia, anzi che di tutte le occorrenze qualche pocco sostantiali in questa materia, è stata data informazione a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et per mezzo di lei a gli Illustrissimi Reverendissimi Signori colleghi suoi e Signori miei. Fu vero che nelle prime settimane della mia venuta qua fu commutata nella pena di cinquanta ducati la pena d'uno lungo carcere, al quale era stata condannata di prima ch'io venissi qua una Lavinia Fonseca giudaizante, de quali denari intesi per certo che una parte fu consegnata per elemosina al monasterio delle monache della Sapientia et un'altra parte al monasterio delle monache della Consolatione, et questo, sicome intesi allora, con ordine del Santo Offitio. Certa cosa è che quando si trattassero qua tali compositioni, se non le potessi impedire, almeno ne darei conto subito al Santo Offitio. Se ancho fussi imputato io, particolarmente supplico quella e gli altri Signori Illustrissimi che vogliano commandar che si truovi il vero et con humilissima riverenza le bascio le mani. Di Napoli nel vi di agosto del lxxiiii

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima  
Humilissimo devoto

**11. Mario Carafa to Cardinal Rebiba, July 6, 1576 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 332r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Signor mio osservantissimo

Da che io mi trovo in questo luogo, ho tenuto sempre per principale fra i desiderij miei che le cause della religione andassero con quella curiosità e rigore di giustitia che ricercano simili materie et io devo; né ho mancato mai di dar conto a Roma di quanto mi è parso bisognevole. E se da alcune settimane in qua io ho servato più lungo silentio del solito, può Vostra Signoria Illustrissima credere che non vi sia corso più di quello di che le ho dato raguaglio, meritevole di avviso: e che non si sia perduto tempo in iscoprire molte cose occolte, come potrà vedere per li notamenti che le si mandano: nel che veramente ha valuto molto la destrezza e diligenza di questo vicario, il quale voglio credere che ogni giorno più sia per sodisfare a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, come fa in tutto il resto, che spetta all'ufficio suo.

Nella causa de'Giudaizanti si è servato il medesimo silentio per la istessa cagione: ultimamente con nuove diligenze, si è ritratto dalla depositione d'una donna tanto, che potemo dire di havere qualche cosa a proposito, sebene nell'adietro le fatiche sono state indarno. Hora, le si manda sumario di quanto ancora [sa] e farassi il medesimo nell'avvenire di tutte le altre cose che succederà, conforme a' comandamenti suoi.

Ho dato ricapito alle lettere mandatemi da Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, a cui bacio le mani, e priego ogni desiderata felicità. Di Napoli a dì vi di luglio MDLxxvi Di vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima.

servitore obligatissimo

Mario Arcivescovo di Napoli

**12. Gaspare Silingardo to Cardinal Rebiba, January 19, 1577 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 463)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo mio signor et padrone colendissimo

Mentre ch'io era in Roma il signor Pietro Dusina mi disse ch'io troverei qui in Napoli un'informatione delli inditiati per conto dell'hebraismo fatta da sua signoria, cavata da molti processi fabricati qua sopra questo delitto, et mi disse di più che quando non la trovassi qui havessi ricorso da lui, che ne teneva copia costì. Io, gionto che fui, non manchai di cercar detta copia per incaminare queste cause per honor del signor Iddio, et non la trovando altrimenti scrissi al detto signor Pietro, che si contentasse mandarmi detta copia, et mai qui non n'ho havuta risposta alcuna. Et dubitandomi che per questi sospetti della peste possano le lettere mie facilmente essere andate in sinistro, ho deliberato ricorrere per questo fatto a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, essendo sicuro che per l'autorità del nome suo queste mie giongeranno sicuramente. Le supplico dunque che voglia ordinare al detto signor Pietro che sia servito mandarmi detta informatione per potere più presto per servitio del Signor Iddio dar principio a queste cause; si degnerà perdonarmi s'io sono stato troppo ardito in scrivere queste quattro righe, che la benignità di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et la natura del negotio mi ha fatto pigliare questa sicurtà, et se non fosse per parerle odioso le raccomandarei anchora le cause di alcuni carcerati qui, che pendono a cotesto tribunale. Et con questo fine humilmente baciandole le mani, le prego dal Signor quello che più desidera.

In Napoli il dì 19 di gennaio 1577.

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima

Humilissimo et devotissimo servitore

Gasparro Sillingardi vicario in Napoli

**13. Gaspare Silingardo to Cardinal Savelli, August 8, 1578 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 602r-v, 642r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo mio signor et padrone colendissimo

Questa matina Monsignor Nuntio m'ha parlato d'un processo che ella scrive ch'habbia consegnato al Signor Annibale Moles instando, che

detto Signor Annibale riconsegnasse detto processo in man sua, io ho detto a lui quello, che dirò anchora a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che è quando piacque alla bona memoria del Cardinale che si procedesse contra le Malvicine, ch'hora sono in Roma, et essendo esse già state citate da me, comparve il detto signor Annibale, et mi disse, che si maravigliava, ch'in questa causa si procedesse, poiche l'haveva per sopita per sino al tempo della bona memoria di Mario Caraffa, et m'essibì la copia autentica che havevano havuto dell'esamine di Giovanna, Catherina, et Manzia Malvicine, insieme con la contestazione della lite, et assignatione del termine alle difese, sino dell'anno, si mal non mi ricordo, 1572, io le presi e le mandai al Cardinale al quale piacque conforme a quello che fu terminato in congregatione, che non ostante questa asserita liberatione, che pretendeva il Moles, si procedeva ad ulteriora contra le dette Malvicine, come si feci, che furono citati di nuovo per la quale citatione essi s'inviarono a Roma, inviate che furono, il detto Moles ricreò che se li restituessero le sue scritture, cioè le dette tre depositioni, la contestatione della lite, et la assignatione del termine alle difese, et havendo il Cardinale in man del quale restano dette scritture, quelle perse o smarrite, m'ordinò che di esse ne facesse trar copia autentica dell'originale, et glielie mandassi, et cosi fu fatto, et le mandai per man del notaro, et ne volsi anchora ricevuto dal detto Moles, per poterlo mostrare al Cardinale come feci, et se Vostra Signoria Illustrissima troverà mai, che il detto Moles ne altri habbia havuta scrittura alcuna da me, se non le dette tre depositioni, la contestazione della lite, et l'assignatione del termine alle difese, le quale scritture le furono consignate, et date sino dell'anno 1572, come appare agl'atti, che sono venuti corti, et che poi per ordine del Cardinale le furono restituite, questa santa congregatione mi mandi in preceptio, che me lo merito, che si bene nel resto io sono imprudentissimo sappia per ch'io conosco quanto sia necessaria la fedeltà, et secretezza nelle cose di religione ch'in questo non voglio mai che l'ignoranza m'escusi, et l'assicuro che questa cosa m'ha di maniera trafitto, che vengo a supplicare Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che si contenti, ch'alla prima rinfrescata io possa venire a Roma per darle conto di questa, et qualche altra cosa, che spero conoscerà la prontezza dell'animo mio in ponere la vita per simili cause, et non in essere traditore in dispreggio di Dio, carico dell'anima mia, et perdita d'ogni sorte di reputatione, et supplico Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che mi perdoni, se nel scrivere havessi passato il termine, perche la grande afflittione, ch'io sento di questo fatto, me ne deve render escusabile appresso di lei, et spererò nella bontà di Iddio, che fara conoscere la verità, ne la malitia del notaro o per disegno suo, o d'altri la potrà odombrare ne d'altro mi rincresce se non

di non essere costi presente per potere dire quello che sarebbe longo a scrivere, et ch'io dirò a suo luogo et tempo, et spererò che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi conoscerà per huomo da bene, in simil conto, se bene nel resto mi conosco imperfettissimo, et con questo fine basciandole humilmente le mani le prego dal S.or Iddio ogni contento.

In Napoli il dì 8 di Agosto 1578

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima  
Humilissimo et devotissimo servitore  
Gasparro Sillingardi

**14. Stefano Quaranta to Cardinal Savelli, July 2, 1578 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 631–634)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo signor mio patrone osservandissimo

Per l'obbligo del mio officio m'ha parso d'avisare a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima d'alcune cose che se sono fatte, et fanno in questa corte dalli presenti signori vicarij quanto a quello ch'appartene alle cause di religione, et tra l'altre sono queste. Vostra Signoria Illustrissima saperà che ritrovandose carcerato in questa corte un prete ch'officiava nell'Hospetale degl'Incurabili nominato Don Angelo Desiderio di Macerata, come haveva detto, et tenuto in presentia di molta gente, che Christo in croce a tempo della sua passione non sparse vero sangue, et come haveva confessato in detto hospitale senza essere stato approvato alla confessione, del ch'essendo convitto per molti testimoni degni di fede, s'avisò Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et da quella si mandò copia authentica d'una sententia, come era stato condannato per diece anni in galera per vizio nefando, dalla quale sententia appareva non essere altrimenti elasso il tempo di tale condennatione, questo don Angelo fo habilitato dalle carcere per il signor vicario Sillingardi, senza ch'io come fisco fosse stato inteso, ne fattone decreto, quale non ritornò altramente, del che resentendome, detto signor vicario à mia instantia ordinò alli... della corte che si trovasse per li quali essendosi usata diligentia non s'è possuto ritrovar in modo alcuno.

Le scritture di cause di religione, benchè si tengano in uno stipo, nondimeno alcune di quelle se lasciano fora, et poi non si conservano, et vanno dispersi per sopra le banche delle camere del detto vicario, dove praticano scrivani della corte, et altre gente, quando se da audientia, et particolarmente questi di a' dietro vi stava el sumario delle persone inquisite de iudaismo, reassunto dal signor Dusina a' tempo era vicario, dove se contene quanto ve sia contro ciascuna persona foglio, per foglio, che facilmente se posseva pigliare et legere da tutti,



et al presente li volumi de dette cause stanno in una camera poco custoditi, del che nd'è stato avertito spesse volte da me, le lettere, quali scriveva l'Illustrissimo cardinale di Pisa bona memoria, et che scriveva Vostra Signoria Illustrissima al Cardinale nostro bona memoria, quale poi li dava al vicario, per esequire quel tanto, ordinava, stavano palese, ch'appersi li servitori le leggevano, et sapevano li secreti di cause di Religione avanti che s'esequessero et in particolare Giovanni Placentino servitore del detto vicario.

Nell'istesse cause di Religione si procede come se fossero meno che cause pecunarie, perche questi Signori Vicarij alle volte permettono, et danno licentia, che li testimonij del processo informativo s'esaminano da ogni minuto scrivano da per loro senz'assistente, et non in loco secreto, ma alla sala dove praticano molte gente, per li quali oltra che non s'osserva il stile del vero esaminare nel interrogare, per esserno ignoranti, se da ancora occasione a molte testimonianze false, perche se li testimonij sapessero ch'hanno da essere esaminati avanti il vicario et persone d'autorità, se resolveriano de dire la verità.

Se procede de piu a citatione, o captura alle volte per semplice relatione del mastro d'atti, o scrivano, firmandono le citationi, et mandati di captura come se fossero mandati cum clausula iustitie, per il che nde sono sequiti inconvenienti assaissimi, non ritrovandosi poi niente contra il denuntiatio, et s'infamano le persone, senza il danno che pateno in starno retenuti et altre spese del ch'essi signori vicarij, nde sono tenuti a restitutione, cossi come a loro ho detto piu volte, et in congregatione perche benche io sia fisco, nondimeno voglio piu per la verita, et il debito procedere che per milli fisci, tra l'altre cose nde referirò una, l'altro giorno fu denunciato a questa corte Giovanni Campanile medico in questa città, ch'havesse mangiato carne questa quatragesima prossima passata, et nel'informatione non n'era stato altro, che il detto del denunciante, quale diceva haverlo inteso dal servitore del detto giovanni et esaminato il servitore, depone essere vero, ma in detto tempo il medico suo patrone stava infermo nel letto, et ch'esso li pigliava li sciropi dal spetiale, per questo solo detto fo citato il Medico dal signor vicario Mascardi, et accettò haverne magnato nel tempo di detta infirmita et retenuto per questo per molti di, et vedendo poi l'informatione insieme con me, non volse che si procedesse piu oltra, non essendoe altro nell'informatione donde per honore di questa corte, attalche non appare ch'have proceduto senz'inditij, et che quel medico non havesse havuto ricorso à questo santo officio pro indebita molestatione, non ha voluto che seli conceda sopra alcuna havendola piu volte dimandata, et l'have habilitata per tutto, senza farne parola in congregatione

di Religione il simile s'è fatto in molte altre persone, contro le quali s'è processo da esso signor Mascardi per semplice denuncia solo, a carceratione, senza esserno prima impegnate informationi. saria bene per oviare a questo procedere cossi facile, tanto piu che questo Regno abonda di testimonij falsi, ch' Vostra Signoria Illustrissima ordinasse per l'advenire non s'havesse in modo alcuno recevere alcuno testimonio in dette cause senza intervento del signor vicario et d'assistente, et per scrivani approbati, buoni cristiani, secreti, et noti ad essi signori vicarij, et che non se proceda ad citatione, ne ad captura senza farsene prima parola in congregatione, cossi come per dispositione de legge si deve attalche in congregatione se discutano l'inditij si sono sufficienti, et al piu delle volte è piu espediente che se proceda contro alcuna persona, prima che se proceda contro un'altra, per la connexità delle cause, et perche se spera piu da uno che da un'altro, il che è necessario farsi poiche da questo procedere cossi facile, se vede ogni giorno in questa corte, che come ad alcuno è mossa lite, o fattoli alcuno dispiacere, per contracava il contrario ricorre a questa corte a denuntiarlo di cose di Religione con portarse il denuntiante li testimonij appresso, et se sono scoperte falsità assai, et poi non se castica nesciuno, cossi come s'è visto in le cause de Giovan Baptista Stantione, Francesco Antonio Pollio, d'un orefice che non me ricordo il nome ma è di casa Moscato, et altri.

In questa corte vi sono nove mastri d'atti, quali oltra che sono ignorantissimi per non saperno apena scrivere, non solo non osservano la pandetta, ma fanno molt'extorsioni, contro li quali ho preso informatione, et fattoci procedere a loro carceratione, et a restitutione dalla bona memoria del Cardinale nostro, et tra l'altri presi informatione contro di Francesco Jovele actuario delle cause di Religione, perche havea inteso gran cose d'esso, et tanto piu ho havuto sospetitione contro de lui, et suoi scrivani perche bona parte de tutti l'inquisiti che sono stati, et sono a tempo mio, nelli loro costituiti, et defensiononi non hanno errato di nominare et excipere contro quelli che se sono esaminati et già havea incominciato a scoprire cose assai contro di lui, et questa causa per ordine del cardinale, la faceva attitare da uno scrivano secreto che non era di questa corte, et presa che fo l'informatione il cardinale la comesse al detto signor Mascardi all'hora suo luocotenente che dovesse procedere all'esequutione, et venendo detta informatione nelle sue mani questi dì a dietro, volse in ogni modo che quest'informatione la sequitasse ad attitare il detto Francesco Jovele, al scrivano del quale pur inquisito consignò l'informatione, et vede quanto era contro di loro, siche l'informatione contro di detto francesco non

s'ha possuto inpiagnare, et tutto questo contro mio volere, et ordine del Cardinale, del quale succedendo la cascata, et infirmita, non ho possuto dirgelo, perno dargli travaglio, con quest'occasione desiderando che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima ordinasse che si mandi copia di quel tanto ch'è solito pagarse per l'atti in quello santo officio, attalche cossi s'osservasse cqua

V'era carcerieri di queste carcere Fabritio de Florio, del quale intendeva molte cose, et particolarmente come dava comodita ch'alli carcerati secreti per cause di Religione seli parlasse da chi loro desideravano, et teneva protettione de carcerati, et faceva banchetti, donde il detto Fabritio una sera al tardo hebbe ardire di volermi corrompere portandomi una mano di ducati da parte di Angelica Granucci carcerata, attalche me portasse bene in suo favore nella causa sua (che credo che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima se ricordi ch'è complice in la causa de Giovan Baptista della Porta) il che non possendo sopportare andai dal Cardinale, et li raccontai questo, et lo fece carcerare, et accettò il tutto nel suo examine, et già io teneva intentione di farlo andare in galera, ma perche il cardinale era compassionevole, del che quella santa anima era soverchio, se contentò che fosse privato dell'officio di carcerieri et che per l'advenire non potesse exercitare il detto, et altro officio in questa corte. Al presente sede vacante contro il detto decreto questi signori vicarij l'hanno admeso ad officio di [nuntio] et esequutore

Quanto all'escomuniche, et monitorij ad instantia di parte, non s'è osservato requisito nesciuno del sacro concilio di Trento, perche fin'qua se sono concesute senza alcuna consideratione, cioè pro relevi, pro causa criminali, et infamatoria, pro batendis testibus coram iudice laico, et pro quacumque causa, in tanto da che è stato l'Arcivescovato di Napoli, non credo che se ne siano concesse tante quante da alcuni mesi in qua

Restariano infinitissime cose à dire circa la poco secretanza delle cause di religione, et della negligentia grande in non procedere in le cause importantissime che dormeno, et circa la confusione di questa corte in ogni cosa, et principalmente d'esserno dui vicarij con la medesima potesta, l'uno concedendo quello che non ha concesso l'altro, per stare in elettione delli mastri d'atti, scrivani, et negotianti da chi delli dui voleno fare provvedere, ma sarrebbe piu presto volume, che lettera, assai me basta a me d'havere accennato Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di queste poche cose, tanto piu che per l'obbligo del mio officio, non sono tenuto, ne devo portare rispetto a nesciuno in simili cose, cossi come ho fatto sempre appresso l'Illustrissimo Cardinale mio bona memoria et al presente fo appresso d'Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, et non facendolo gravaria l'anima mia, si che per questa lettera io me sgravo, rilassando

ogni cosa a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, si ben la supplico di farme gratia scrivendo al signor vicario o altro, di questo non farmene autore, per evitare alcuno inconveniente che potesse nascere, sapendose da essi signori vicarij ch'io habbia scritto questa lettera.

Io ho servito il cardinale a quest'ufficio dalla sua venuta in Napoli in qua, et quanto m'amava, et come me sia portato fatigando in questa corte dalla matina alla sera, Vostra Signoria Illustrissima sene porra informare, al presente ...m'ha confermato. Quest'ufficio io non l'ho procurato ma il cardinale da se fece elettione di me, facendomene parlare dove volse il signor suo vicario Sillingardi, et per conpiacere à sì tanto prelato et santo homo, l'accettai lasciando tutte le mie clientele ch'havea in questa citta, cossi al presente non interpongo parte con l'Illustrissimo successore che sara, pure per l'advenire m'offero servire, et con questo li fo humilmente reverentia, pregando il signor per la salute di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima. Da Napoli el di della visitatione della Beata Vergene del 1578.

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima

Humilissimo Servitore

Stefano Quaranta Advocato fiscale dell'Arcevescovato di Napoli

**15. Annibale di Capua to Cardinal Savelli, July 10, 1579 (ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 690r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo signor mio padrone colendissimo

Nel ricever l'ultima lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di 4 del presente ordinai subito che si usasse diligentia per trovar Beatrice Portella spagnola, et carcerarla conforme alla sua commissione. Fin qui ella non si è trovata : ma havendosi a continuare nella medesima diligentia avvisarò Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di quel che succede. S'attenderà all'espeditiione della causa di mastro Theofilo d'Amico da Trapani ch'ella s'è degnata di commettermi; et à lei darò raguaglio di quel, che si risolverà in essa. Mando a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima il summario della causa di Laura et di Beatrice Raguant per haver da lei, et da quei Signori Illustrissimi Colleghi la resolutione di doi dubbij; l'uno s'elle habbiano da tormentarsi pro ulteriori veritate; et l'altro se le Signorie Vostre Illustrissime commandano, che loro habbiano da abiurare pubblicamente o pure nell'Arcivescovato sedente curia per haver Laura molti figliuoli, et alcuni dottori di qualità c'hanno servito, et forse servono di presente per Auditore Reggio di provincia, et per esser Beatrice giovane donzella da marito. Com'io riceverò l'ordine da Vostra Signoria Illustrissima l'eseguirò subito riverentemente con quella ispeditione

delle sudette cause; et mi raccomando nella sua protettione et gratia.  
Di Napoli a 10 di luglio 1579

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima  
Devotissimo et obligatissimo servitore  
Annibale Arcivescovo di Napoli

**16. Annibale di Capua to Cardinal Savelli, October 23, 1579 (ACDE, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 700r–v, 759r)**

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo signor mio padrone colendissimo

Fu habilitato Mastro Theofilo d'Amico nel suo Monastero con idonea sicurtà in conformità dell'ordine che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima si degnò di di mandarmi con la sua di 10 d'Ottobre. Et per la repetitione de testimonij della Corte, io n'ho scritto all'ordinario di quella terra in Calavria: dove essi si trovano

Quanto a Beatrice figliuola di Laura Raguanti, essendo Vostra Signoria Illustrissima restata servita d'ordinarmi nella sudetta lettera, che se bene come giudaizante doveva abiurare pubblicamente, non di meno, ch'io l'havessi dato conto, se vi fusse stato qualche rispetto per far altra determinatione io per obedire a V.S. Illma le dirò humilmente ch'ella in età d'undeci o dodeci anni fu ridotta dalla Madre, et che hora è giovane di 17 vergine, et da marito, et ha il padre, et il zio, che servono a Sua Maestà in offici molto honorati; et di più ha fratelli qualificati, alcuni de quali essendo Dottori hanno servito à Sua Maestà per Auditori Regij di Provincia; et oltre questi rispetti mi par anco conveniente di notificar a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che per quanto intendo da questi consultori della Congregatione è stato usato in questa città, che simili figliuole vergini et in età nubile habbiano ricevuta gratia dell'abiuratione segreta. Onde parrebbe loro, che à lei si potesse far la sudetta gratia, ò almeno, che per honor della famiglia, che milita ugualmente nella madre, et nella figlia si facessero abiurare ambidue nella cappella ianuis apertis et curia sedente. Ma dell'una, et dell'altra se starà aspettando d'intender la volontà di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima per esseguirila subito con humilissima riverenza.

Circa quel Vincenzo di Giovan Leonardo, del qual Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi commanda con quest'ultima sua di 17 che si procuri d'haverne notitia io ho ordinato subito, che fusse esaminato un Giovan Leonardo di Benevento, che si trova prigionie nelle mie carceri; et essendo stato interrogato del sopradetto Vincenzo di Giovan Leonardo non ha saputo darne conto alcuno. Però se ben di lui non s'habbia particolar contrasigno; non dimeno per altra via si farà

diligentissima inquisitione per saperlo; et se ne darà conto a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima.

Mario spada per l'informatione, ch'io ne ho havuto dal Reverendo Padre Rettore del Gesù fu à questi giorni passati in Napoli di ritorno di Spagna: ma che hora al creder suo si trova a Pizzo terra di Calavria. Io conforme all'ordine di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mandarò l'informatione contra di lui all'ordinario di quel luogo; et le bascio humilissimamente le mani. Di Napoli à 23 d'Ottobre 1579

Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima  
Devotissimo et obligatissimo servitore  
Annibale Arcivescovo di Napoli

**17. Annibale di Capua to Cardinal Savelli, December 28, 1579**  
(ACDF, *Stanza Storica* HH 2-a, f. 728r-729r)

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo signor mio padrone colendissimo

Ferrante Guidi, del qual Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi commanda con l'ultima sua di 18 di Decembre, ch'io le dia informatione è carcerato in questo tribunale ad instantia di Monsignor Reverendissimo di Policastro, che implorò il braccio di questa Corte per procuratorem nel mandato del quale si esprimeva, che procurasse di far ritenere pro causis concernentibus fidem. Et perche questo Ferrante mostra d'haver suspecto il predetto Monsignor Reverendissimo m'ha fatto molte volte instantia ch'io volessi conoscer la sua causa, et spedirla per giustitia. Ma perche se gliè fatto intendere, ch'io non haveva altra auttorità che di tenerlo per Monsignor Reverendissimo di Policastro esso sara mosso a far dar memoriale a quella Santa Congregatione.

Nella causa di Livia, et Prudentia Cappelle, delle quali Vostra Signoria Illustrissima s'è degnata di mandarmi memoriale incluso non si è mancato con molti essamini, et con molte essortationi di persuaderle a confessar la verità ma persistend'esse nella negativa, si sono date loro le defensionì et hora si attende alla repetitione de testimoni, non si mancara di tirar la causa a fine con ogni diligenza possibile.

Circa Laura Raguantì, et Beatrice sua figliuola Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi ordinò con una di 10 d'ottobre, ch'io havessi fatta abiurare pubblicamente laura et che di Beatrice sua figliuola, che come giudaizante doveva pur abiurar pubblicamente io l'havessi dato conto, se vi fusse stato qualche rispetto per temperar la deliberatione. Risposi per mie lettere de 13 d'ottobre ch'io haverei esseguito riverentemente l'ordine con far abiurar la madre et quanto alla figliuola io avvisai Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di quei rispetti, che concorrevano nel

caso di lei, et nella sua persona. Poi volend'io mandar in essecutione l'ordine dell'abiuratione, parve a questi consultori della Congregatione che dovendosi far quest'atto publico sarebbe stato bene di aspettar la risoluzione di due, o tre altre giudaizanti per far l'abiuratione insieme, et cosi io diedi conto a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di questa dilatione per lettere mie di 7 di Novembre passato. Et dopo quella lettera mandai à Vostra Signoria Illustrissima il sommario d'Angela Leone, et Virgilia sua figlia; acciò si degnasse di comandarmi quel ch'io doveva eseguire circa le predette la risoluzione delle quali io aspettava per espedirle in compagnia di Laura Raguantì, in caso, che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima havesse ordinato la lor publica abiuratione. Ma poiche delli predetti sommarij io non ho ancor ricevuta risposta per la gravità delle occupationi che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima sostiene, io ho risoluto di mandar piu allongo l'abiuratione della predetta Laura, et cosi in un giorno di queste feste abiurerà senza fallo. Et quanto à Beatrice sua figliuola io starò aspettando risposta di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima di quel ch'io l'avvisai con la mia di 13 d'ottobre, non potend'io eseguire altro nella persona di lei per l'ordine che Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi diede con una sua di 10 d'ottobre, ch'io dessi conto delli rispetti, che militavano a favor suo, et che poi essa mi haverebbe ordinato quel, ch'io doveva eseguire.

Circa Mastro Theofilo d'Amico Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi comanda con quest'ultima ch'io aspetti la repetitione de testimoni, et che poi spedisca la causa di giustitia. Ma perche io l'avvisai per una mia di 13 ottobre che la repetitione de testimoni io l'haveva rimessa in partibus a Monsignor Vescovo di Squillaci, et dopo quella lettera Vostra Signoria Illustrissima mi... con una sua di 20 di Novembre, che quando l'espeditone della causa si sarebbe spedita in quella santa congregatione io, dubitando che la repetitione che si aspetta di Squillaci non fusse tardata, mi risolsi di mandar il processo a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima accompagnato con una mia di 27 di Novembre. Hora in quest'ultimo ordine di 18 di dicembre, c'ho ricevuto da lei non si facendo intentione della ricevuta del processo, né potend'io esser sicuro che questa commissione di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima sia in risposta della mia di 27 di Novembre, o di quella prima di 13 d'ottobre, riceverei somma gratia ch'ella si degni di scrivermi, et havendo ricevuto il processo, ella mi comanda ch'io aspetti la repetitione di testimonij et che poi spedisca la causa per giustitia, desiderando questa declaratione per non far errore circa il modo di obedire a gli ordini di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, li quali eseguirò sempre con humilissima riverenza.



Quanto a Francesco Antonio di Massarijs, che fu inviato à queste carceri, lo mandai a quel Santo Officio in compagnia di Porfirio Roscio per la fragata del Santo Officio, che condusse anchora Antonino Vento. Et non havend'altro da rispondere alla lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima le bascio humilissimamente le mani, et mi raccomando nella sua protettione et gratia. Di Napoli a 28 di dicembre 1579. Di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima et Reverendissima

Devotissimo et obligatissimo servitore  
Annibale Arcivescovo di Napoli

# Notes

## Introduction

1. The terms *converso* and New Christian are used interchangeably in this text to refer to the Iberian converts from Judaism and their descendants.
2. Biagio Aldimari, *Memorie Historiche di Diverse Famiglie Nobili così Napoletane come Forastiere* . . . (Naples, 1691), 214–215, 504–506.
3. Biagio Aldimari, *Historia Genealogica della Famiglia Carafa, divisa in tre libri* (Naples, 1691); *idem*, *Emendazione della Critica di Roberto Lanza, cioè di Domenico di Conforto a due Principali Luoghi dell'istoria della Famiglia Carafa, composta dal Regio Consigliero Biaggio Aldimari* (Naples, 1692); testimony regarding the relationship between Alfonso Carafa and the Beltran is in ASDN, Sant'Ufficio 155, ff. 280r–285r, 303r–305v; Brianna Beltran can in all probability be identified with the Brianna Beltrame cited as the mother of the cardinal in the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* s.v. Carafa, Alfonso; for the Villagut, see chapter 1 below; on the development of genealogical thinking in Iberia and its relationship to the mass conversions of 1391 and their aftermath, see David Nirenberg, “Mass Conversion and Genealogical Mentalities: Jews and Christians in Fifteenth-Century Spain,” *Past and Present* 174 (2002), 3–41.
4. See, for example, the cycle of paintings on the life of Ferdinand the Catholic that adorned the walls of the viceroy's palace and included prominent depictions of both the conquest of Granada and the expulsion of the Jews in 1492: Joan Lluís Palos, *La Mirada Italiana. Un Relato Visual del Imperio Español en la Corte de sus Virreyes en Napoles (1600–1700)* (Valencia: Universitat de Valencia, 2010).
5. Jonathan Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the World Maritime Empires* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 1.
6. From the vast production of Giuseppe Galasso, see in particular his *Mezzogiorno Medievale e Moderno* (Turin: Einaudi, 1965); *Alla Periferia dell'Impero: Il Regno di Napoli nel Periodo Spagnolo, Secoli XVI–XVII* (Turin: Einaudi, 1994); *Storia del Regno di Napoli*, vol. 2: *Il Viceregno Spagnolo, 1494–1622* (Turin: UTET, 2005) and *Storia del Regno Napoli*, vol. 3: *Il Viceregno Spagnolo e Austriaco, 1622–1734* (Turin: UTET, 2006); Rosario Villari, *La Rivolta Antispagnola a Napoli: Le origini, 1585–1647* (Bari–Rome: Laterza, 1967); *idem*, *Politica Barocca. Inquietudini, Mutamento e Prudenza* (Bari–Rome: Laterza, 2010); Aurelio Musi, *Mezzogiorno Spagnolo: La Via Napoletana allo Stato Moderno* (Napoli: Guida, 1991). On the rise of the bureaucratic *ceto civile*, Aurelio Cernigliaro, *Sovranità e Feudo nel Regno di Napoli, 1505–1557* (Naples: Jovene, 1983); Pier Luigi Rovito, *Respubblica dei Togati. Giuristi e*

- Società nella Napoli del Seicento* (Naples: Jovene, 1981); On the aristocratic reaction, Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Il Bisogno di Eternità. I Comportamenti Aristocratici a Napoli in Età Moderna* (Naples: Guida, 1988); Tommaso Astarita, *The Continuity of Feudal Power: The Caracciolo di Brienza in Spanish Naples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Raffaele Ajello, *Una Società Anomala. Il Programma e la Sconfitta della Nobiltà Napoletana in Due Memoriali Cinquecenteschi* (Naples: Fridericiana, 1996).
7. Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, *Felipe II y el Gobierno de Italia* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal, 1998); Mireille Peytavin, *Visite et Gouvernement dans le Royaume de Naples, (XVIe–XVIIe siècles)* (Madrid: Casa de Velazquez, 2003).
  8. Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, "La Fundación del Consejo de Italia: Corte, Grupos de Poder, y Periferia, 1536–1559," in José Martínez Millán, ed. *Instituciones y Elites de Poder en la Monarquía Hispánica Durante el Siglo XVI* (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma, 1992), 216; Manuel Rivero Rodríguez and José Martínez Millán, eds. *Centros de Poder Italianos en la Monarquía Hispánica (Siglos XV–XVIII)* (Madrid: Polifemo, 2010).
  9. Kevin Ingram, "Historiography, Historicity, and the Conversos," in *idem. The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 345.
  10. Francisco Marquez Villanueva, "Conversos y Cargos Concejiles en el Siglo XV," *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos* LXVIII, no. 2 (1957), 503–540; *idem.*, "El Problema de los Conversos: Cuatro Puntos Cardenales," in Josep Sola Sole et al. eds., *Hispania Judaica* (Barcelona, 1980), 1: 51–75.
  11. Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *La Clase Social de los Conversos en Castilla en la Edad Moderna* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991); Albert Sicroff, *Los Estatutos de Limpieza de Sangre. Controversias Entre los Siglos XV y XVII*. Spanish version revised by the author (Madrid: Taurus, 1985); Linda Martz, *A Network of Converso Families in Early Modern Toledo* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Ruth Pike, *Linajudos and Conversos in Seville: Greed and Prejudice in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Spain* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002); Jaime Contreras et al., *Familia, Religión y Negocio: el Sefardismo en las Relaciones entre el Mundo Ibérico y los Países Bajos en la Edad Moderna* (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2002).
  12. Jaime Contreras, *Sotos contra Riquelmes. Inquisidores, Regidores, Criptojudíos* (Madrid: Anaya y Mario Muchnik, 1992); on the "conspiracy of Beja," see Adriano Prosperi and John Tedeschi, ed. *Dizionario Storico dell'Inquisizione* (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2010), 1: 383–385.
  13. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora*, 1–39; James Boyajian, *Portuguese bankers at the court of Spain, 1626–1650* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983); *idem.*, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).
  14. See the collected essays in Richard Kagan and Philip Morgan, eds., *Atlantic Diasporas: Jews, Conversos, and Crypto-Jews in the Age of Mercantilism, 1500–1800* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).
  15. On the fragility of the *pax hispanica* in Italy, see Michael J. Levin, *Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

# 1 From Jews to New Christians: Religious Minorities in the Making of Spanish Naples

1. On the conquest and its aftermath, see Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, *El Reino de Nápoles en el Imperio de Carlos V. La Consolidación de la Conquista* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001) and Giuseppe Galasso and Carlos Jose Hernando Sanchez, eds. *El Reino de Nápoles y la Monarquía de España: Entre Agregación y Conquista (1485–1535)* (Madrid: Real Academia de España en Roma, 2004).
2. Vivid contemporary accounts of Lautrec's expedition are available in Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Silvana Seidel Menchi (Turin: Einaudi, 1971), 3: 1815–2070, and Leonardo Santoro, *La Spedizione di Lautrec nel Regno di Napoli*, ed. Tommaso Pedio (Galatina: Congedo, 1972); for modern accounts see Giuseppe Galasso, *Alla Periferia Dell'impero. Il Regno di Napoli nel Periodo Spagnolo, Secoli XVI–XVII* (Turin: Einaudi, 1994), 61–69; Vincenzo Saletta, *La Spedizione di Lautrec contro il Regno di Napoli. Contributo alla Storia del Mezzogiorno d'Italia* (Rome: CESM, 1976).
3. Gregorio Rosso, *Istoria delle cose di Napoli sotto L'imperio di Carlo V* (Naples, 1770); Karl Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V: The Growth and Destiny of a Man and of a World-Empire*, trans. C.V. Wedgwood (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), 365–371; Giuseppe Coniglio, "Note sulla società napoletana ai tempi di Don Pedro di Toledo," *Scritti Minori da Ricerche Archivistiche* (Naples: Giannini, 1988), 67–96.
4. Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, *Castilla y Nápoles en el Siglo XVI: El Virrey Pedro de Toledo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 1994) is the best modern treatment of the viceroy's career; see also Galasso, *Alla Periferia Dell'impero*, 69–90; there exist two celebratory chronicles written by Neapolitan contemporaries of the viceroy: Scipione Miccio, *Vita di Don Pietro di Toledo* in *Archivio Storico Italiano* 9 (1846), 3–89, and the *Istoria di Notar Antonio Castaldo, libri quattro, ne' quali si descrivono gli avvenimenti più memorabili succeduti nel Regno di Napoli sotto il Governo del Vicerè D. Pietro di Toledo, e degli altri Vicerè suoi successori fino al Card. di Granvela in Raccolta di tutti i più rinomati Scrittori dell'Istoria Generale del Regno di Napoli* (Naples, 1769), 6: 31–155.
5. Hernando Sánchez, *Castilla y Nápoles*, 406–426, 504–528; Franco Strazzullo, *Edilizia e urbanistica a Napoli dal '500 al '700* (Naples: Arte tipografica, 1995), 3–35.
6. On the significance of this term, see the collected essays in John Marino and Antonio Calabria, eds. *Good Government in Spanish Naples* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990).
7. The pages devoted to the expulsion in the classic study by Nicola Ferorelli, *Gli Ebrei dell'Italia meridionale Dall'età Romana al Secolo XVIII* (Turin, 1915, repr. Naples: Dick Peerson, 1990), 199–252, have been superseded by Felipe Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos del reino de Nápoles," *Hispania* 9 (1949): 28–76, 179–240; Viviana Bonazzoli, "Gli ebrei del Regno di Napoli all'epoca della loro espulsione," *Archivio Storico Italiano* CXXXVII (1979): 495–559, CXXXIX (1981): 179–238; Cesare Colafemmina, *Ebrei e Cristiani Novelli in Puglia: Le Comunità Minori* (Bari: Regione Puglia, 1991), 24–28, 33, 43–48, 74–77, 87–89, 97–99; David Abulafia, "Ferdinand the Catholic and

- the Kingdom of Naples," in *Italy and the European Powers: The Impact of War, 1500–1530*, ed. Christine Shaw (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 129–158, in particular 152–158.
8. Bonazzoli, "Gli ebrei del Regno di Napoli," 498–511; on the peculiar geography of the Jewish communities in Naples, where Jews did not live in a single quarter, but rather in a series of distinct areas within the oldest precinct of the city, see Giancarlo Lacerenza "Lo spazio dell'ebreo. Insediamenti e cultura ebraica a Napoli (secoli XV–XVI)" in Laura Barletta, ed., *Integrazione e Emarginazione. Circuiti e modelli. Italia e Spagna nei secoli XV–XVIII* (Naples: CUEN, 2002), 357–427; *idem.*, "La topografia storica delle giudecche di Napoli nei secoli X–XVI," *Materia Giudaica* XI (2006), 113–142.
  9. Antonio de Ferrariis, *La Giapigia e varii opuscoli* (Lecce: Tipografia Garibaldi, 1868), 2: 124–133; Benedetto Croce, "Un'epistola del Galateo in Difesa degli Ebrei," in *Aneddoti di Varia Letteratura*, (Bari: Laterza, 1953), 1: 132–140.
  10. Tristano Caracciolo, *De Inquisitione Epistola in Raccolta di Tutti i Più Rinnomati Scrittori Dell'istoria Generale del Regno di Napoli* (Naples, 1769), 6: 121–133.
  11. Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos," 191; one of Alarcon's letters, dated October 6, 1533, is in Giuseppe Coniglio, *Il Vicereame di don Pietro di Toledo* (Naples: Giannini, 1984), 24–25. (AGS, Estado Napoles, 1016, 33).
  12. *Ibid.*, 194–197, 207–211 ; Bonazzoli, "Gli ebrei del Regno di Napoli," 262.
  13. On the symbolic importance of Charles' visit to Naples and the celebrations of his monarchy, see Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, "El Glorioso Triunfo de Carlos V en Napolés y el humanismo de corte entre Italia y España." *Archivo Storico per le Province Napoletane* CXIX (2001), 447–521; Teresa Megale, "'Sic per te superis gens inimica ruat.' L'ingresso trionfale di Carlo V a Napoli (1535)," *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane* CXIX (2001), 587–610; Maria Antonietta Visceglia, "Il viaggio cerimoniale di Carlo V dopo Tunisi," in *Carlos V y la Quiebra del Humanismo Político en Europa (1530–1558)*, ed. José Martínez Millán (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal, 2001), 2: 133–172.
  14. Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos," 197–202, 213–215; Giuseppe Coniglio, "Ebrei e Cristiani a Manfredonia nel 1534," *Archivio Storico Pugliese* XXI (1968), 63–69.
  15. *Libro secondo delle lettere dell'illustre signor don Antonio di Guevara* (Venice, 1548), 189–193, 218–222.
  16. Samuel Usque, *Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel*, trans. and ed. Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1965), 210. See also Mayer von Kayserling, *Geschichte der Juden in Portugal* (Leipzig, 1867), 263–265. On the cultural patronage of the Abravanel family, see Laura Minervini, "Experiencias culturales de los sefardíes en Italia en el siglo XVI," in *Fronteras y Interculturalidad entre los Sefardíes Occidentales*, eds. Harm den Boer and Paloma Díaz-Maz (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2006), 20–34.
  17. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 13r–14r.
  18. Rosso, *Istoria delle cose di Napoli*, 70.
  19. Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos," 217–220.
  20. Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos," 220–224.
  21. *Napoli Sacra di D. Cesare D'Engenio Caracciolo* (Napoli, 1623), 334; Riccardo Filangieri, *I Banchi di Napoli dalle Origini alla Costituzione del Banco delle Due Sicilie (1539–1808)* (Napoli, 1940), 31–38. See also Agnese Sinisi, "Per una

- storia dei monti di Pietà nel Regno di Napoli," in Daniele Montanari, *Monti di Pietà e Presenza Ebraica in Italia* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1999), 245–283.
22. Ruiz Martín, "La expulsión de los judíos," 225–227.
  23. Coniglio, *Il Viceregno di don Pietro di Toledo*, 431–432. Letter dated Lecce, February 27, 1541 (AGS, Estado Napoles 1033, 14).
  24. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 217r–218v.
  25. Giuseppe Coniglio, *Il Regno di Napoli al Tempo di Carlo V*, (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche, 1951), 11–16; Aurelio Cernigliaro, *Sovranità e Feudo nel Regno di Napoli, 1505–1557* (Naples: Jovene, 1983); Hernando Sánchez, *Castilla y Nápoles*, 222–228, 366–370; *idem.*, "Nobiltà e potere vicereale a Napoli nella prima metà del '500," in *Nel Sistema Imperiale. L'Italia Spagnola*, eds. Giuseppe Galasso and Aurelio Musi (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche, 1994), 147–163.
  26. See in particular, the work by Marquez Villanueva cited above.
  27. AGS, Estado, libro 58: "Sumario de lo que resulta de las informaciones de las ciudades, castillos, tierras, lugares y otros bienes burgensaticos y feudales tomados y pervenidos en poder de la regia corte y de otros terceros, por ella concedidos y alienados, y el precio, valor, rentas y qualitat de cada una d'ellos en la mejor manera che hasta gora se ha podido haver..." transcribed in Nino Cortese, "Feudi e feudatari napoletani della prima metà del Cinquecento," in *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane* LIV (1930), 5–150; LV (1931), 41–128; LVI (1931), 233–248, in particular LV, 89–97.
  28. Camillo Tutini, *Sopplimento all'Apologia del Terminio* (Naples, 1643); the role of the Sanchez in Aragonese politics and in the conquest of Southern Italy is recounted in detail in Jerónimo Zurita, *Historia del Rey don Hernando el Catolico, de las Impresas y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610) 5: 249–266; on the family's alleged role in the murder of Pedro de Arbués, see E. William Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 10–28; on the Sicilian branch of the family, see Nadia Zeldes, "The Former Jews of this Kingdom": *Sicilian Converts after the Expulsion, 1492–1516* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 44–47.
  29. Roberto Mantelli, *Burocrazia e Finanze Pubbliche a Napoli a Metà Cinquecento* (Naples: Pironti, 1981), 76, 126.
  30. The full text of Camerario's letter to Charles V is in Coniglio, *Il Viceregno di don Pietro di Toledo*, 80–89 (from 1536, undated, AGS Estado, Napoles 1025, 88); other letters regarding his investigation and the sentence for extortion are in *ibid.*, 114–153, 214–228, 559; see also Giovanni Muto, *Le Finanze Pubbliche Napoletane tra Riforme e Restaurazione, 1520–1634* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche, 1980), 39–40; for other examples of leniency towards corrupt officials, see Jean-Claude Waquet, *Corruption: Ethics and Power in Florence, 1600–1770* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).
  31. Giuseppe Coniglio, *Visitatori del Viceregno di Napoli* (Bari: Tipografia del Sud, 1974); Mantelli, *Burocrazia e Finanze Pubbliche*, 78; Henar Pizzaro Llorente, "La visita al Reino de Nápoles de 1559: El efrentamiento entre Gaspar de Quiroga y Juan de Soto," in *Política, Religión, y Inquisición en la España Moderna: Homenaje a Joaquín Pérez Villanueva* (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1996), 567–586.
  32. The Neapolitan *seggi* were aristocratic neighborhood organizations of purportedly ancient origins that were responsible for a limited number of legislative responsibilities.

33. "dinanzi a loro andava Alonso Sanchez giovane, General tesoriero del regno, portando inanzi cavallo due grandi borse di monete d'oro, e d'argento; e di seggio in seggio, e di luogo in luogo, come gli pareva, empieva il pugno di denari, e gli gettava alle turbe, ch'erano per le strade, in segno di liberalità e d'allegrezza." Castaldo, 56–57, 137; the event is also cited, from a different source, in John Marino, *Becoming Neapolitan: Citizen Culture in Early Modern Naples* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 77; for a discussion the Neapolitan ethic of liberality, see Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: 14th to 18th Centuries*, trans. Sian Reynolds (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) 2: 489–491 and Hernando Sánchez, "Nobiltà e potere vicereale," 151–152, 159.
34. AHN, OM, Santiago, exp.1584bis, cc.nn., process of Francisco de Carafa y Villarraut; digital photo consulted at <http://pares.mcu.es/>; ASE, Mediceo del Principato 4073, f. 251.
35. AHN, OM, Santiago, exp.1584bis, cc.nn.; both Rafael Galzerano and Luigi Cruilles testified on Carafa's behalf. Laudomia Villagut and Luigi Villagut, the auditor of the province of Otranto, were both investigated by the Holy Office in 1580s: ACDF, Decreta 1580–1581, f. 255r, 271v, 293v, 298v, 319v, 329v, 334v.
36. Coniglio, *Il Regno di Napoli al tempo di Carlo V*, pp. 234–235
37. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 129, f. 65v–66v; ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 77r–78v; BNN, ms. XI A22, 364–366; Coniglio, *I Vicerè Spagnoli di Napoli* (Naples: Fiorentino, 1967), 114–115, conflates Girolamo Pellegrino with a landholder of the same name who was active in civic politics in the 1520s; Pellegrino told inquisitors in 1571 that he was 50 years old, which would have made him too young to be identified with this earlier figure.
38. *Ibid.* 137, f. 17v. Transcriptions of this document and of ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 212, both currently unavailable at the archive, were kindly provided to me by Giovanni Romeo.
39. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 83r–88v, 223r–223v; Coniglio, *Visitatori del Vicereame di Napoli*, 98, 112, 285; Mantelli, *Burocrazia e Finanze Pubbliche*, 54; *ibid.*, *L'alienazione della Rendita Pubblica e i suoi Acquirenti dal 1556 al 1583 nel Regno di Napoli* (Università degli Studi di Genova, 1994), 66–84; on tax offices, see Giovanni Muto, "Una struttura periferica del governo dell'economia nel mezzogiorno spagnolo: I percettori provinciali," *Società e Storia* 19 (1983), 19.
40. Filangieri, *I Banchi di Napoli*, 19; Alfonso Silvestri, "Sui banchieri pubblici napoletani nella prima metà del Cinquecento," *Bollettino dell'Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli* no. 2 (1950), 22–34.
41. Calculations based on the data in Mantelli, *L'alienazione della Rendita Pubblica*; on the role of Genoese banking in Naples see Raffaele Colapietra, "Le rendite dei genovesi nel Regno di Napoli in un documento del 1571," *Critica Storica* VII (1968), 93–101; *idem*, "I Genovesi a Napoli nel primo Cinquecento," *Storia e Politica* 6/7 (1968) p. 386–419; *idem*, "Genovesi in Puglia nel Cinque e Seicento," *Archivio Storico Pugliese* XXXV (1982), 21–72; Giovanni Brancaccio, "Nazione Genovese": *Consoli e Colonia nella Napoli Moderna* (Naples: Guida, 2001).
42. The bibliography on Juan de Valdés is extensive. For his activity in Naples, see in particular: José C. Nieto, *Juan de Valdés and the Origins of the Spanish and*



- Italian Reformations* (Geneva: Droz, 1970); Massimo Firpo, "The Italian Reformation and Juan de Valdés," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* XXVII (1996) 353–364; *idem*, "Reform of the Church and heresy in the age of Charles V: reflections of Spain in Italy," in *Spain in Italy: Politics, Society, and Religion, 1500–1700*, eds. Thomas James Dandeleit and John Marino (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 457–480. Pasquale Lopez, *Il Movimento Valdesiano a Napoli: Mario Galeota e le sue Vicende col Sant'Uffizio* (Naples: Fiorentino, 1976) and Massimo Firpo and Sergio Pagano, eds. *I Processi Inquisitoriali di Pietro Carneseccchi: 1557–1567*, (Vatican City: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, 1998) contain references to Valdés' circle of followers in Naples, including a deposition by Alfonso Sanchez dated August 21, 1560 in which he testifies that he knew Marcantonio Flaminiio, Carneseccchi, and Valdés when they were in Naples. He considered them "persune da bene et honorate" who were held in esteem by Pedro de Toledo and the rest of the court: 1: 349–353.
43. see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, s.v. Busale, Girolamo; Aldo Stella, *Anabattismo e antitrinitarismo in Italia nel XVI secolo* (Padua: 1969), 1–97; Luigi Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio della Inquisizione in Napoli* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1892), 1: 159–163.
  44. Edouard Pommier, "L'itinéraire religieux d'un moine vagabond italien au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Melanges d'Archeologie et d'Histoire* 66 (1954), 293–322.
  45. D'Engenio Caracciolo, *Napoli Sacra*, 439–441; see also Teresa Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana* (Napoli: Giannini, 1875), 1: 59. Another charitable institution founded in this period and destined for a long and important role in the city, is the hospital of *gli Incurabili*, founded by a Catalan widow, Maria Lorenza Lonc, in order to fulfill a vow. The hospital had a similar goal to the conservatory and other lay religious institutes, and was supervised by Gaetano da Thiene, the founder of the new Theatine order. It is not clear, however, whether Lonc was in fact a New Christian. See D'Engenio Caracciolo, *Napoli Sacra*, 183–191, as well as Filiangieri Ravaschieri, *Storia della Carità*, 1: 215–311.
  46. Francesco Divenuto, *Napoli, L'Europa, e la Compagnia di Gesu nella "Cronica" di Giovan Francesco Araldo* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1998), 13–15; Pietro Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia* (Rome: Civiltà cattolica, 1922) 2: 433–447; on Vignes' role in the Jesuit attack on the followers of Valdés see Lopez, *Il Movimento Valdesiano*, 109–110, 116–117, 161–164; Ulderico Parente, "Sul preteso giudaismo di fra Sisto da Siena davanti all'Inquisizione Romana (1551–1553)," in *Le Inquisizioni Cristiane e gli Ebrei* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2003), 375–405.
  47. Marcel Bataillon, "Juan de Valdés Nicodemite?" in *Aspects du libertinisme au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1974), 93–104; see also the more recent investigations of Stefania Pastore, *Un'Eresia Spagnola. Spiritualità Conversa, Alumbadismo, e Inquisizione (1449–1559)* (Florence: Olschki, 2004), in particular 254–262.
  48. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 193–211; Rafaella Ajello, *Una Società Anomala. Il Programma e la Sconfitta della Nobiltà Napoletana in Due Memoriali Cinquecenteschi* (Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1997), 85–108; Uberto Foglietta, *Tumultus sub Petro Toletto Prorege* (Naples, 1769); Coniglio, *I viceré spagnoli*, 60–71.
  49. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 204–210.
  50. Ajello, *Una Società Anomala*, 101–104.

51. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 217–234; ARSI, *Neap.* 72, “Historia Provinciae Neapolitanae, 1551–1613”; on the role of the Society of Jesus in the early years of the Roman Inquisition, see Giovanni Romeo, “Note sull’Inquisizione Romana tra il 1557 e il 1561,” *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 36 (2000), 115–141.

## 2 Conversos in Counter-Reformation Italy

1. Kenneth R. Stow, *Catholic Thought and Papal Jewry Policy 1555–1593* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1977).
2. Renata Segre, “La Controriforma: espulsioni, conversioni, isolamento,” in *Gli Ebrei in Italia I*, ed. Corrado Vivanti, vol. 11 of *Storia d’Italia, Annali* (Turin: Einaudi, 1997), 709–778.
3. Attilio Milano, *Il Ghetto di Roma. Illustrazioni Storiche* (Rome: Staderini, 1964); Kenneth R. Stow, *Theater of Acculturation: The Roman Ghetto in the Sixteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001).
4. Milano, *Il Ghetto di Roma*, 55.
5. The phrase belongs to Marina Caffiero, *Battesimi Forzati. Storie di Ebrei, Cristiani, e Convertiti nella Roma dei Papi* (Rome: Viella, 2005), 12.
6. Pietro Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia* (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1951), 2: 147–161; John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 188–192; Milano, *Il Ghetto di Roma*, 283–303; Natalie Rothman, “Becoming Venetian: Conversion and transformation in the seventeenth century Mediterranean,” *Mediterranean Historical Review*, June 2006, 39–75; Stephanie B. Siegmund, *The Medici State and the Ghetto of Florence: The Construction of an Early Modern Jewish Community*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 171–200.
7. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 165–199.
8. Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù*, 150–151.
9. Adriano Prosperi, “L’Inquisizione romana e gli ebrei,” in *L’Inquisizione e gli Ebrei in Italia*, ed. Michele Luzzati (Bari: Laterza, 1994), 67–120; Nicolas Davidson, “The Inquisition and the Italian Jews,” in *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Stephen Haliczer (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 19–46; Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, “L’Inquisizione romana e i giudaizzanti in Italia.” in *L’Inquisizione. Atti del Simposio Internazionale, Città del Vaticano, 29–31 Ottobre 1998* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2003), 505–538.
10. Caffiero, *Battesimi forzati*, 26–34; Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550–1670* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1983); Adriano Prosperi, “Ebrei a Pisa. dalle carte dell’Inquisizione romana,” in *Gli Ebrei di Pisa. Secoli IX–XX*, ed. Michele Luzzatti (Pisa: Pacini, 1998), 117–151.
11. Francesco Albizzi, *De Inconstantia in Iure Admittenda, vel non...* (Amsterdam 1683), 58.
12. On converts to Islam, see: Lucia Rostagno, *Mi Faccio Turco. Esperienze ed Immagini dell’Islam nell’Italia Moderna* (Rome: Istituto per l’Oriente, 1983); Bartolomé Bennassar and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d’Allah. L’Histoire Extraordinaire des Renégats, XVIe et XVIIe Siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989).
13. Anna Foa, “Un vescovo marrano. Il Processo a Pedro de Aranda (Roma 1498),” *Quaderni Storici* 99 (1998), 533–551.

14. Giuseppe Marcocci, "'...Per capillos adductos ad pillam.' Il dibattito cinquecentesco sulla validità del battesimo forzato degli ebrei in Portogallo (1496–1497)," in *Salvezza delle Anime, Disciplina dei Corpi. Un Seminario sulla Storia del Battesimo*, ed. Adriano Prosperi (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2006), 339–423; Segre, "La Controriforma," 721.
15. Marrano was the term most commonly used by contemporaries to refer to those conversos who refused complete conversion to Christianity and continued to practice Judaism in one form or another.
16. There is little surviving documentation relating to this campaign, which has nonetheless received ample attention from scholars. Segre, "La Controriforma," 721–722; Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, "Ancora sui giudaizzanti portoghesi di Ancona (1556): condanna e riconciliazione," *Zakhor V* (2001–2002), 39–51.
17. Prosperi, "L'Inquisizione romana e gli ebrei," 80.
18. Aron di Leon Leoni, "La diplomazia estense e l'immigrazione dei cristiani nuovi portoghesi a Ferrara al tempo di Ercole II," *Nuova Rivista Storica*, LXXVIII (1994), 293–326; *idem*, "Gli ebrei a Ferrara nel XVI secolo," in *Il Rinascimento. Storie e Personaggi*, ed. Adriano Prosperi: vol. 6 of *Storia di Ferrara* (Ferrara: Corbo, 2000), 278–311; Renata Segre, "La formazione di una comunità marrana: i portoghesi a Ferrara," in *Storia d'Italia*, Annali 11: *Gli Ebrei in Italia*, ed. Corrado Vivanti (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), 781–834.
19. Leoni, "Gli Ebrei a Ferrara," 300.
20. Guido dall'Olio, "Il controllo di eresia," in *Storia di Ferrara*, 6: 216; Leoni, "Gli Ebrei a Ferrara," 299.
21. Aron di Leone Leoni, "Due personaggi della 'Nation Portughesa' di Ferrara: un martire e un'avventuriero," *Rassegna Mensile d'Israel* LVII, 3 (1991), 411–415.
22. Leoni, "Due personaggi," 416–420; Savelli, who also played an important role in the Neapolitan trials, proved to be a cleric of a harsh anti-Jewish bent not only as an inquisitor, but in his pastoral role as Bishop of Benevento, where he issued decrees forbidding Jews to leave the ghetto for three days prior to Easter and to enter churches during celebration of the mass. See Cesare Colafemmina. "Gli Ebrei a benevento," *Italia Judaica VI: Gli Ebrei nello Stato Pontificio Fino al Ghetto (1555)*. (Rome: Ministero di Beni Culturali e Ambientali, 1998), 225–226 and the entry in *Dizionario Storico dell'Inquisizione*, s.v. Savelli, Giacomo.
23. Leoni, "Due personaggi," 423–428.
24. The Roman phase of the trial, which lasted 14 months, is completely obscure, though the *decreta* of the Congregation of the Holy Office in ACDF contain references to it.
25. Leoni, "Due personaggi," 430–435.
26. Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, "Ebrei e nuovi cristiani fra due inquisizioni: il Sant'Uffizio di Venezia e quello di Pisa," in *L'Inquisizione e gli Ebrei in Italia*, ed. Michele Luzzati (Bari: Laterza, 1994), 233–241; Brian Pullan, "L'Inquisizione e gli Ebrei a Venezia," in Luzzati, *L'Inquisizione e gli Ebrei*, 251–264.
27. Pullan, *The Jews of Europe*, 46–50.
28. Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, "Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the Inquisition," in *The Jews of Early Modern Venice*, eds. Benjamin Ravid and Robert C. Davis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 98–99.

29. *Ibid.*, 104–107.
30. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, II 1-g, “Repertorio di decreti del Sant’Ufficio ordinati per città,” 22.
31. quoted in Zorattini, “Ebrei e nuovi cristiani fra due inquisizioni,” 240.
32. *Processi del S. Ufficio di Venezia Contro Ebrei e Giudaizzanti*, ed. Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini (Florence: Olschki, 1980–1999), 2: 54–55, 79–91.
33. Prosperi, “Ebrei a Pisa,” 129–130; Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, “Gli ebrei, il principe, e L’Inquisizione,” in Luzzati, *l’Inquisizione e gli Ebrei*, 217–231.
34. Prosperi, “Ebrei a Pisa,” 133.
35. Giuseppe Marcocci, “Itinerari marrani. I portoghesi a Livorno nei secoli dell’età moderna,” in *Livorno 1606–1806, luogo di Incontro tra Popoli e Culture*, ed. Adriano Prosperi (Torino: Allemandi, 2009), 405–417.
36. Prosperi, “Ebrei a Pisa,” 136–143.
37. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii 1597–1599*, f. 845. (November 25, 1599).
38. Marcocci, “Itinerari marrani.”
39. Giuseppe Laras, “I marrani di Livorno e l’Inquisizione di Livorno,” in *Livorno e il Mediterraneo nell’età Medicea. Atti del Convegno 23–25 Settembre 1977* (Livorno: Bastogi, 1978), 99; Alvarez’s execution is described in a contemporary chronicle: *Racconto delle Cose piu Considerabili che Sono Occorse nel Governo di Roma*, ed. Maria Teresa Bonadonna Russo (Rome: Società Romana di Storia Patria, 2004), 88–89.
40. Prosperi, “Ebrei a Pisa,” 132–33, 148–49.
41. Stefania Pastore, “Tra conversos, gesuiti, e Inquisizione: Diego de Guzmán e i processi di Ubeda (1549–1552),” in *Inquisizione: Percorsi di ricerca*, ed. Giovanna Paolin (Trieste: Università di Trieste, 2001), 217.
42. “Instrucciones de Don Fernando de Valdes,” in *Introducción a la Inquisición Española. Documentos Basicos para el Estudio del Santo Oficio*, ed. Miguel Jiménez Monteserín (Madrid: Editora, 1980), 216.
43. ANTT, *Conselho Geral da Inquisição*, livro 323, doc. 4.
44. Francisco Bethencourt, *The Inquisition: A Global History, 1478–1834*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 174–245, originally published as *L’Inquisition à l’Epoque Moderne. Espagne, Portugal, Italie XVe–XIXe Siecle* (Paris: Fayard, 1995); “Instrucciones para la visita inquisitorial al distrito,” in *Introducción*, ed. Monteserín, 291–338; Charles Amiel, “Crypto-Judaïsme et Inquisition. La matière juive dans les édits de la foi des Inquisitions ibériques,” *Revue de l’histoire des religions* CCX, no. 2 (1993), 145–168.
45. José Pedro Paiva, “As entradas da Inquisição, na vila de Melo, no século xvii: pânico, integração/segregação, crenças e desagregação social,” *Revista de História das Ideias* 25, (2004), 169–208.
46. Jaime Contreras and Gustav Henningsen, “Forty-Four Thousand Cases of the Spanish Inquisition (1540–1700): Analysis of a Historical Data Bank,” in *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies on Sources and Methods*, eds. Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), 124–125; on the early anti-judaizing campaigns of the Spanish Inquisition, see among others Ricardo García Cárcel and Doris Moreno Martínez, *Inquisición: Historia Crítica* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2000), 31–41, 209–216; Juan Gil, *Los Conversos y la Inquisición Sevillana*, (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2000–2001); John Edwards, *Religion and Society in Spain, ca. 1492*

- (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996); Tarcisio de Azcona, "La Inquisición española procesada por la Congregación General de 1508," in *La Inquisición Española. Nueva Visión, Nuevos Horizontes*, ed. Joaquín Pérez Villanueva (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1980), 89–155.
47. On Valdés' reorganization of the Spanish Inquisition, see José Luis González Novalín. *El Inquisidor General Fernando de Valdés (1483–1568)* (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1968–1971); *idem*, "Reforma de las leyes, competencia y actividades del Santo Oficio durante la presidencia del inquisidor general don Fernando de Valdés (1547–1566)," in *La Inquisición Española. Nueva visión, nuevos horizontes*, 193–218, as well as the *Dizionario Storico dell'Inquisizione*, s.v. Valdés, Fernando de.
  48. Charles Amiel, "Les cent voix de Quintanar. Le modèle castillan du maranisme (I)," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 218, no. 2 (April–June 2001), 204–211.
  49. Contreras, *Sotos contra Riquelmes*, 87–110.
  50. *Ibid.*, 187–258.
  51. *Ibid.*, 35–42.
  52. *Correspondencia Diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede durante el Pontificado de S. Pio V.* ed. Luciano Serrano. (Madrid, 1914), 3: 168–175.
  53. Robert Rowland, "l'Inquisizione portoghese e gli ebrei," in *l'Inquisizione e gli Ebrei*, 47–66, in part. 51–55.
  54. Giuseppe Marcocci, *I custodi dell'Ortodossia. Inquisizione e Chiesa nel Portogallo del Cinquecento* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2004), 136.
  55. The first *regimento* of the Portuguese Holy Office is printed in its entirety in Antonio Baião, *A Inquisição em Portugal e no Brasil século XVI. Subsídios para a sua história*. (Lisbon: Arquivo Histórico Português, 1920), appendix, 31–57.
  56. Marcocci, *I custodi dell'ortodossia*, 85–86, 110, 125–126.
  57. Elvira Azevedo Mea, "A Inquisição Portuguesa. Apontamentos Para o seu Estudo," in *L'Identità Dissimulata. Giudaizzanti Iberici nell'Europa Cristiana dell'Età Moderna*, ed. Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini (Florence: Olshchki, 2000), 330.
  58. Antonio Borges Coelho, *Inquisição de Évora. Dos Primórdios a 1668*. (Lisbon: Caminho, 1987), 1: 195–196.
  59. Jose Veiga Torres, "Uma longa guerra social. Novas perspectivas para o estudo da Inquisição portuguesa. A Inquisição de Coimbra," *Revista da Historia das Ideias* 8 (1986), 56–70; Mea, "A Inquisição portuguesa," 330.
  60. Borges Coelho, *Inquisição de Évora*, 1: 314–321.
  61. Baião, *A Inquisição*, appendix, 15.
  62. Mea, "A Inquisição portuguesa," 322; Marcocci, "'...per capillos adductos ad pillam'," 403–404.
  63. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio della Inquisizione*, 1: 97–119, 196–215; Giovanni Romeo, "Una città, due inquisizioni: l'anomalia del Sant'Ufficio a Napoli nel tardo '500," *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* XXIV (1988): 42–67; Adriano Prosperi, *Tribunali della Coscienza. Inquisitori, Confessori, Missionari* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), 65–75. On the case of Milan, see Massimo Carlo Giannini, "Fra autonomia politica e ortodossia religiosa: il tentativo di introdurre l'Inquisizione 'al modo di Spagna' nello Stato di Milano (1558–1566)," *Società e Storia* XCI (2001): 79–134.
  64. Romeo De Maio, *Le Origini del Seminario di Napoli* (Naples: Fausto Fiorentino, 1958); Michele Mancino, *Licentia Confitendi. Selezione e Controllo dei*

*Confessori a Napoli in Età Moderna* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2000), 23–65.

65. I calculated the total number of trials by a comparison of the trials left in the fondo Sant'Ufficio of the Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli with a contemporary index compiled by Francesco Joele (Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, vol. II, doc. 2, 6–12.) To this I added three trials, those of Francesco Cortellaro, Hieronimo Ferraro, and Horatio Spinola, which are mentioned in the correspondence but not present in either the Neapolitan archive or the Joele inventory. For the data on the trials I have relied on *Il Fondo Sant'Ufficio dell'Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli, Inventario (1549–1647)*, ed. Giovanni Romeo, "Campania Sacra," 34, 2003, which supersedes the older inventory in *L'Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli. Guida*, eds. Giuseppe Galasso and Carla Russo, (Napoli: Guida, 1978).
66. The series of letters from the bishops of the Regno to the Congregation of the Holy Office, (ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, LL 3-a) provides plenty of evidence of the lack of means and in some cases lack of will of Southern bishops to mount trials for heresy and apostasy.
67. Romeo, "L'Inquisizione a Napoli e nel Regno di Napoli," 629–640.
68. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 1-a, f. 1.
69. Giovanni Romeo, *Aspettando il boia. Condannati a morte, confortatori e inquisitori nella Napoli della Controriforma* (Florence: Sansoni, 1993), 83–84.

### 3 "El de los Catalanes": The First Campaign against the New Christians, 1569–1582

1. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio*, 129, f. 182r (doc. 2 in appendix).
2. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio*, 129, f. 25r–28v.
3. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio*, 129, f. 1r–55v.
4. Ruiz Martin, "La expulsión de los judíos," 213–217, 229–230; the documents relating to the trial are available in Giuseppe Coniglio, *Il vicereigno di don Pietro di Toledo (1532–53)* (Naples: Giannini, 1984), 2: 561–570.
5. BNN, ms. X D 28, Antonio Caracciolo, *Vita di Paolo IV*, f. 189v.
6. The assertion of the Theatine historian Joseph Silos that the campaign began in 1567 and that the judaizers were uncovered by Theatine confessors is inexact. While two Sicilians, Domenico della Senia and Giovan Domenico Russo were tried for apostasy to Judaism in 1567 (fragments of the trial are conserved in ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 89), they were unconnected to the larger group. His assertion that Theatines discovered the sect is also questionable. While the Theatine Girolamo Ferro participated in some interrogations during the first phase of the trial, he was asked to join the investigation when it was already underway: Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 306.
7. Adriano Prosperi, "L'Inquisizione: verso una nuova immagine?," *Critica storica* XXV (1988), 119–145; John Tedeschi, "Preliminary Observations on Writing a History of the Roman Inquisition," in *The Prosecution of Heresy: Collected Studies on the Inquisition in Early Modern Italy*, (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1991), 3–21; Giovanni Romeo, *L'Inquisizione nell'Italia moderna* (Bari: Laterza, 2002), 29–35.

8. The first Neapolitan anti-converso campaign has been studied in the past, but never subject to a complete reconstruction based on all of the available source material, including the records of the central archive of the Holy Office in Rome, and many aspects of it, including the decision by the Congregation of the Holy Office to stop the trials, remove the first inquisitor, and re-interrogate many of the witnesses, were entirely unknown. See Luigi Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 1: 296–7, 306–319; Henry Charles Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies* (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 87; Romeo De Maio, “Ideali e fortune di un controriformista minore: Girolamo Ferro,” in *Riforme e miti nella Chiesa del Cinquecento* (Naples: Guida, 1973), 189–227; Pierroberto Scaramella, “La campagna contro i giudaizzanti nel Regno di Napoli (1569–1582): antecedenti e risvolti di un’azione inquisitoriale,” in *Le Inquisizioni Cristiane e gli Ebrei* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2003), 357–373; Id., *Le lettere della Congregazione del Sant’Ufficio ai tribunali di fede di Napoli* (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2002), lxxxi–lxxxviii.
9. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio* 129, f. 18r; the date of the incarceration is October 22.
10. *Ibid.*, f. 39r–39v.
11. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio* 129, f. 37r–38v (doc. 1 in the appendix).
12. On the use of torture by the tribunals of the Roman Inquisition, see Christopher F. Black, *The Italian Inquisition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 81–88.
13. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio* 155, f. 1r–2v, 239r–241r.
14. *Ibid.*, f. 267r–275v.
15. On the gap between inquisitorial categories and the mentalities of those on trial, see the classic Carlo Ginzburg, “The Inquisitor as Anthropologist,” in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989), 156–165.
16. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio* 129, f. 46r–50r, 50v–54v, 126r–130r, 141r–142r, 146r–146v, 152v–155r.
17. Romeo, *L’Inquisizione nell’Italia moderna*, 45–47.
18. On Vignes, see above, p. 45; Romeo, *Aspettando il boia*, 320–321.
19. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio*, 137, f. 1r.
20. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio*, 129, f. 107–109r; ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio*, 137, f. 9r–9v.
21. ASDN, *Sant’Ufficio*, 139, f. 1r–51r.
22. It is unlikely that the Roman curia was completely unaware of the trials, as news of them had been spread around Italy by an *avviso* of uncertain date, but which probably comes from the end of 1569. The text of the *avviso* is in Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell’Inquisizione*, 308.
23. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1567–1571, f. 138r–139r; a later deposition by Francesco Cartiglia is included as doc. 4 in the appendix.
24. *Le lettere*, doc. 56, 24.
25. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1567–1571, f. 150v–151r.
26. Laerzio Cherubino, *Bullarium sive nova collectio plurimarum constitutionum apostolicorum diversorum romanorum pont. A Pio quarto usque ad Innocentium Nonum* (Rome, 1617), 2: 200–201.
27. Despite the circumstances of his departure, the Archbishop Mario Carafa retained his esteem for Tasso, recommending him to Gregory XIII in 1573 as a prelate who had “served as *vicario* to my great satisfaction, and that of the entire city.” In 1574 he recommended him for the vacant episcopal see



- of Sant'Agata dei Goti, in a letter in which he remembered the discovery of "those sects of Jews" as among Tasso's principal achievements; De Maio, *Le Origini del seminario di Napoli*, doc. 9, 203. In 1597, Tasso was archbishop of Lanciano, a diocese in Abruzzo: Gigliola Fragnito, *Proibito capire. La Chiesa e il volgare nella prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005), 265.
28. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 1r–2v, 12r–14r, 62r–62v (Bruno's deposition before Dusina is doc. 3 in the appendix).
  29. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 201r–201v, 220r–222v.
  30. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell'Inquisizione*, doc. 10, 2: 74–75.
  31. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1571–1574, c. 32v–33v; Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell'Inquisizione*, 1: 310; Francesco Schinosi, *Istoria della Compagnia di Gesù, appartenente al Regno di Napoli* (Napoli 1706), 1: 249.
  32. Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell'Inquisizione*, 1: 310, 2: 74.
  33. Two abjurations were held on January 21, 1572, three on January 25, 1572, and three more on January 27, 1572: Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell'Inquisizione*, doc. 1, 2: 1–2.
  34. The sentence is in ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1571–1574, f. 51. The most detailed accounts of the execution are provided by the records of the Roman confraternity of San Giovanni Decollato, reproduced in Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio dell'Inquisizione*, 1: 315–316, n. 1.
  35. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1571–1574, f. 67r–67v; For a comparison between the Iberian *auto da fe* and the Roman ceremony, see Bethencourt, *The Inquisition*, 246–315.
  36. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 212, cc.nn. (Livia Fernandes' second confession is included below, along with that of her sister Beatrice, as documents 5 and 6 in the appendix.)
  37. Antonio Bulifon, *Giornali di Napoli dal 1547 al 1606* (Naples: Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, 1932), 1: 44; Domenico Antonio Parrino, *Teatro Eroico e Politico de' Governi de' Vicere del Regno di Napoli dal Tempo del Re Ferdinando il Cattolico fino al Presente* (Naples, 1730), 1: 303–304.
  38. BNN, ms. XI A22, f. 151r.
  39. Fausto Nicolini, *Aspetti della vita Italo-Spagnuola nel cinque e seicento* (Napoli: Guida, 1934), 89–90.
  40. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 796.
  41. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 631–634 (doc. 14 in appendix).
  42. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 671.
  43. ACDF, St. St. HH 2-a, ff. 199, 607, 724, 795.
  44. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 490, ff. 1r–20v.
  45. *Ibid.*, ff. 21r–171r.
  46. ACDF, St. St. HH-2 a, f. 602r (doc. 13 in appendix), 662, 622; ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii* 1578–1579, f. 219v–220r; Niccolò Toppi, *De origine tribunalium urbis neapolis* (Naples, 1666), 3: 111–119, 161–166.
  47. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 41 (doc. 7 in the appendix).
  48. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 44 (doc. 9 in the appendix).
  49. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 116r (doc. 10 in the appendix).
  50. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 226, f. 116r–126r.
  51. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 671, f. 690r (doc. 15 in appendix).
  52. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii*, 1578–1579, f. 269r.
  53. *Le lettere*, doc. 110, 113, 117, 46–50.

54. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 700r (doc. 16 in appendix).
55. *Le lettere*, doc. 118, 50.
56. *Le lettere*, doc. 121, 51; ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, HH 2-a, f. 728r–729r (doc. 17 in appendix).
57. ASDN, *Sant'Ufficio* 155, f. 253r–254r.
58. ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii* 1577–1578, f. 27r–27v; on the prescriptions of canon law for the children of convicted heretics, see Kenneth Pennington, “Pro peccatis patrum puniri: A Moral and Legal Problem of the Inquisition,” *Church History* 47 (1978), 137–154.
59. *Successi tragici ed amorosi di Silvio et Ascanio Corona*, ed. Angelo Borzelli, (Napoli: Casella, 1908), 66–67; Ferorelli, *Gli Ebrei dell'Italia meridionale*, 237–238.
60. Tutini, *Sopplimento*.
61. ARSI, Neap. 2, ff. 112–118, 185, 198, 201; ARSI, Neap. 3, f. 40–57, 293; Gennaro Nardi, “Due opere per la conversione degli schiavi a Napoli,” *Asprenas* 13 (1966), 3–38.
62. Martz, *A Network of Converso Families*, 194–203, 297–337, 370–388.

#### 4 The Rise of the Portuguese Merchant-Bankers, 1580–1648

1. For an overview of the dynastic crisis and its resolution, see Henry Kamen, *Philip of Spain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997) 168–177, 242–245; on the contribution of the Kingdom of Naples, both in finances and manpower, to Philip's Portuguese campaign, see Giuseppe Coniglio, *I viceré spagnoli di Napoli* (Naples: Fiorentino, 1967), 131–132.
2. Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, “Las negociaciones con los cristianos nuevos en tiempos de Felipe III a la luz de algunos documentos inéditos,” *Sefarad* 66 (2006), 345–376; David Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute: Converso Identities in Iberia and the Jewish Diaspora, 1580–1700* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 20–22. Graizbord estimates that “hundreds and probably thousands of Lusitanian conversos crossed the Portuguese border into Castile, Aragon, and Navarre during the period of Spanish control.”; Anthony Molho, “Ebrei e Marrani fra Italia e Levante Ottomano,” in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 11: Gli Ebrei in Italia*, ed. Corrado Vivanti (Turin: Einaudi, 1997), 1009–1043.
3. Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 143–163; Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers*, 17–18.
4. Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, *Injurias a Cristo. Religión, política y antijudaísmo en el siglo XVII* (Universidad de Alcalá, 2002), describes the mounting anti-Jewish fervor in Madrid in the 1630s, including an *auto de fe* in 1632 in Plaza Mayor.
5. Ruggiero Romano, “Tra XVI e XVII secolo: Una crisi economica: 1619–1622,” *Rivista Storica Italiana* LXXIV (1962), 480–531; Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers*, 19–42; on the career of Olivares see J.H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: the Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986).
6. Galasso, *Alla periferia dell'impero*, 191–192; Muto, *Le finanze pubbliche del Regno di Napoli*, 91–108; Antonio Calabria, *The Cost of Empire: The Finances of the Kingdom of Naples in the time of Spanish Rule* (Cambridge, 1991), 37–39.

7. The history of the Vaaz family in the kingdom of Naples was first reconstructed in two articles by Maria Sirago which provide a wealth of archival documentation regarding the family's patrimony and political position, though their description of the Inquisition in the kingdom and the religious status of the Vaaz as Jews is inexact: "L'inserimento di una famiglia ebraica portoghese nella feudalità meridionale: I Vaaz a Mola di Bari (circa 1580–1806)," *Archivio Storico Pugliese* 40 (1987), 119–158 and "Due esempi di ascensione signorile: I Vaaz Conti di Mola e gli Acquaviva Conti di Conversano tra '500 e '600," *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* XXVI (1986), 169–213; Carolina Belli, "Michele Vaaz *hombre de negocios*," *Ricerche sul '600 napoletano* (1990), 7–23. The date of Miguel Vaaz's arrival in the kingdom and the reasons for his coming are unclear; according to one legend, so far unsubstantiated, he was sent to Naples by Philip II himself.
8. On the reforms of Lemos and Vaaz's role in their creation see Giuseppe Coniglio, *Il Vicereame di Napoli nel secolo XVII* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1955), 190–216; Galasso, *Alla periferia dell'impero*, 157–164; on Lemos' cultural patronage in Naples, see Otis H. Green, "The Literary Court of the Conde de Lemos at Naples, 1610–1616," *Hispanic Review* vol. 1, no. 4 (1933), 290–308 and Girolamo Miranda, *Una quiete operosa. Forma e pratiche dell'Accademia napoletana degli Oziosi, 1611–1645* (Naples: Fridericiana, 2000).
9. Sirago, "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 126–27; some evidence of Vaaz's commercial transactions is available in the records of the Banco della Pietà: *Notizie tratte dai giornali copiapolizze dell'antico banco della pietà*, ed. Fausto Nicolini (Naples: Banco di Napoli, 1951), 43, 145, 185, 196, 199, 212, 239–241, 256, 262–264, 275, 279, 288, 299.
10. BNN, ms. X.B.65, "Michele Vaaz e le sue pregiudiziali invention," cc.nn.; BNN, ms. Brancacciana V.B.10, ff. 10–40, 63–66, 108–109.
11. Sirago, "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 131–132; Francesco Zazzera, "Narrazioni tratte dai giornali del governo di Don Pietro Girone Duca d'Ossuna, viceré di Napoli," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 9 (1846), 478, 481–82, 510–12; on the agitation of the seggi against Vaaz's manipulation of the grain market in 1622, after Osuna's departure, see Nunzio Federigo Faraglia, *Storia dei Prezzi a Napoli dal 1131 al 1860* (Naples: Nobile, 1878), 151–52, 198–200.
12. On Osuna's career and reputation, see the biography by Luis M. Linde, *Don Pedro Girón, duque de Osuna: la hegemonía española en Europa a comienzos del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Ediciones Encuentro, 2005), in particular 125–203.
13. Giuseppe De Sanctis, *Ricordi storici di Mola di Bari* (Napoli: Aniello Eugenio, 1880), 70–90; the privilege granted by Philip II is in the appendix to the text, xxi–xxxix; on the centrality of feudal titles and landholding for economic and social strategies of aristocratic families in the Kingdom of Naples throughout the early modern period, see Gerard Delille, *Famille e proprietà dans le royaume de Naples (XVe–XIXe siècle)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1985).
14. *Ibid.*, 90–97; this occurred in the context of a widespread inflation in the value of aristocratic titles, which became more than doubled as the century progressed. See the statistics provided in Astarita, *The Continuity of Feudal Power*, 220.

15. The story of Casa Vaaz/San Michele is recounted in detail in L. D'Addabo, "San Michele e una colonia serba," *Iapigia* XIV (1936), 289–301. Despite the heavily racist overtones of the article, it provides an accurate reconstruction of the events surrounding the colony's construction and its end. The acts of foundation of Casa Vaaz and San Michele and a brief contemporary summary of the events leading to the expulsion of the slaves are included in an appendix to the article.
16. Sirago, "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 156; Annastella Carrino, "Città, patriziati, fazioni. La politica locale nel mezzogiorno spagnolo: Tre studi di caso," *Società e Storia* 113 (2006), 559–598; Brancaccio, *Nazione Genovese*, 94–97.
17. Sirago, "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 133; Toppi, *De origine tribunalium*, 3: 26–27, 66–70.
18. For the decree Francesco Capecelatro, *Diario di Francesco Capecelatro: contenente la storia delle cose avvenute nel reame di Napoli negli anni 1647–1650* (Naples, 1854), 1: 220 and Giuseppe Donzelli, *Partenope Liberata ovvero la heroica risoluzione fatta dal popolo di Napoli* (Naples, 1647), 113; ACDF, BB–3 b, f. 990; for an recent account of the 1647 revolt, which lasted until April 6, 1648, long after Masaniello himself had been killed, see Silvana D'Alessio, *Masaniello* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2007).
19. Capecelatro, *Diario*, 3: 76–79; ACDF, St. St. BB–3 b, ff. 1069–1075.
20. Lodovico Pepe, "Nardò e Terra d'Otranto nei moti del 1647–1648," *Archivio Storico Pugliese* vol. 1, no. 2 (1895), 285–321; the Count of Conversano proved equally ruthless against his own subjects, executing the cathedral canons of Nardò several days later.
21. This is the reconstruction provided in an anonymous memorial, which probably came from within the curia: ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, BB 3-b, 483.
22. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, BB 3-b, 569–570.
23. ACDF, *Stanza Storica* BB 3-b, 1095–1105.
24. ACDF, *Stanza Storica* BB 3-b, f. 468–469.
25. Francesco Capecelatro, *Degli annali della città di Napoli* (Naples, 1849), 2: 203–209; significantly, one author wrote a poem commemorating the protest in support of the old aristocracy in which described d'Aquino as "the vile mud of a low-born Jew," though he was not in fact of Jewish origin: Villari, *La rivolta antispagnola*, 177–180. See also Astarita, *The Continuity of Feudal Power*, 171–182, on this incident and the resistance of the old aristocracy to marriage with members of new families.
26. ACDF, *Stanza Storica*, BB 3-b, f. 1106.
27. Sirago, "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 155; on the Neapolitan nobility in the seventeenth century, see Giovanni Muto, "La feudalità meridionale tra crisi economica e ripresa politica," *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* XXXVI (1986), 29–55.
28. Both the texts of Confuorto and the Corona brothers exist only in manuscript. I used the copy of the *Notizie* in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome ms.V.E. 1307; other copies can be found in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Naples, see Sirago "L'inserimento di una famiglia," 125; Silvio and Ascanio Corona, *Successi diversi occorsi ai Napoletani* exists in various copies, BNN, ms. XVIII.3, ff. 191–199, 359–369 contains the story of the Vargas and Vaaz families; The edition edited by Borzelli contains a partial census of the manuscript copies of the text and a summary of their contents.

29. BNN, ms. XVIII.3, ff. 192–193; BNR, ms. V.E.1307, ff. 91–94; Toppi, *De origine tribunalium*, 32–33; BNN, ms. X.B.50, “Giornali storici delle cose accadute nel regno di Napoli nel governo di D. Ferdinando Afan de Ribera Enriquez Duca d’Alcalà,” 43–45.
30. On the Pinto outside of Naples, see Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers*, 48, 74–75.
31. Ciro Cannarozzi, *Francesco Pinto Principe d’Ischitella* (Quaderni de “Il Gargano,” 1962).
32. *Asentista*: the term used to designate the bankers who purchased asiento bonds from the crown.
33. On the Cortizos family, Julio Caro Baroja, *Los judíos en la España moderna y contemporánea* (Madrid: 1978) 2: 114–134; Carmen Sanz Ayán, “Consolidación y destrucción de patrimonios financieros en la edad moderna: Los Cortizos (1630–1715)” in H. Casado Hernando and R. Robledo Hernández, ed. *Fortuna y negocios. La formación y gestión de los grandes patrimonios (siglos XVI–XX)* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2002), 73–98; on Sebastian Hierro del Castro, see the entry in *Diccionario Biografico Espanol*; Salvador Escallon, *La verdadera alquimia, oracion funebre en las exequias del señor D. Sebastian Lopez Hierro de Castro* (Naples, 1667); Toppi, *De origine tribunalium*, 3: 141.
34. J.H. Elliott and Jonathan Brown, *The Sale of the Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 279, 290.
35. Edward Glaser, “Miguel da Silveira’s El Macabeo,” *Revue des Etudes Portugaises et de l’Institut Français en Portugal* 21 (1959), 5–49; Benedetto F. di Bitonto, “Miguel de Silveira, letterato e cristiano nuovo nel Viceregno di Napoli,” in Giancarlo Lacerenza, ed. *Hebraica Haereditas: Studi in Onore di Cesare Colafermina* (Naples: Università degli Studi L’Orientale, 2005), 33–58; Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto: Isaac Cardoso: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Marranism and Jewish Apologetics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 141–145, considers Silveira a probable crypto-Jew because of his choice to write on the Maccabean revolt, and because of his inclusion in a contemporary list of Hispano-Jewish poets compiled by Miguel de Barrios in Amsterdam in the late seventeenth century. On the list, Meyer Kayserling, “Une histoire de la literature juive de Daniel Levi de Barrios,” *Revue des Etudes Juives*, XVIII (1889), 276–289.
36. Luis Enriquez de Fonseca, *De podagra* (Naples, 1687), 19–20; Caro Baroja, *Los judíos*, 3: 152.

## 5 The Inquisition against the Vaaz

1. Romeo, “Una città, due inquisizioni,” 42–67. The title of minister was intended specifically to avoid placing emphasis on the arrival of a genuine inquisitor in a city that had violently resisted the installation of a dependant tribunal. When one of the ministers requested, in 1621, to be allowed to use the title of Inquisitor of the Kingdom of Naples, the Congregation of the Holy Office allowed him to do it, on the condition that he did so “prudently and circumspectly.”: AGOP, series II, vol. 65, f. 624.
2. ACDF, St. St. BB3-b, f. 19, 50; the Vaaz family’s inquisitorial investigations, have been subject to limited reconstructions made without access to the primary source material in the ACDF; Amabile, *Il Santo Ufficio*, 2: 41–51;

and Maria Sirago, "L'Inquisizione a Napoli nel 1661," *Quaderni dell'istituto di scienze storico-politiche della facoltà del magistero dell'università di Bari* (1980), 429–454.

3. *Ibid.*, f. 20r; ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii* 1636, f. 21r.
4. ACDF, St. St. BB 3-b, f. 20r; Capecelatro, *Degli annali della città di Napoli*, 69–70.
5. ACDF, St. St. BB 3-b, f. 20.
6. *Ibid.*, f. 24r–25r, 66, 79.
7. *Ibid.*, 25r–26r, 93r–108r.
8. On the demographic effects of the plague, see the exhaustive study by Idamaria Fusco, *Peste, demografia, e fiscalità nel Regno di Napoli del XVII secolo* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2007), in particular 99–117.
9. ACDF, St. St. BB 3-b, ff. 26v, 990, 1008–1015, 1024–1028, 1039–1046, 1051.
10. *Ibid.*, ff. 1, 29r, 1029; ASV, Cong. Concilio, Relat. Dioec. 560 A, f. 179.
11. *Ibid.*, ff. 141–146, 1176–79.
12. *Ibid.*, f. 350, 468–469.
13. ACDF, St. St. BB-3 b, f. 261–62, 290–91.
14. *Ibid.*, ff. 211–213, 215–219.
15. *Ibid.*, f. 219.
16. *Ibid.*, f. 483.
17. *Ibid.*, ff. 637, 645, 649, 655–658.
18. *Ibid.*, f. 1233.
19. *Ibid.*, ff. 1098–1101.
20. *Ibid.*, ff. 1243–1253, f. 725.
21. *Ibid.*, ff. 1285–1292.
22. *Ibid.*, ff. 1292–1303.
23. *Ibid.*, ff. 1303–1327.
24. The depositions, which all took place between April 1 and April 4, 1660, are as follows: *ibid.*, ff. 677–680: Grazia Vaaz; f. 691: Beatrice Vaaz, wife of Enrique Suarez Coronel, daughter of Tommaso Vaaz; f. 695: same day, her sister Gratia Vaaz, 50 years old, born in Monteroni; ff. 699–702: Cesare di Roberto's wife Isabella Vaaz Sousa, born in Taurisano; ff. 703–705: Duarte di Rivera, 45 years old, married to Fiorenza Vaaz d'Andrada, son-in-law of Anna Vaaz; f. 708: Emanuele Vaaz d'Andrada, baron of Campo Marino; ff. 713–718: Beatrice Vaaz, wife of Benedetto di Giorgio; f. 734: Fiorenza Vaaz d'Andrada; ff. 734–5: Beatrice Vaaz, daughter of Duarte, niece of Miguel, 60 years old, born in Lamego; f. 739: Tommaso Gomez d'Acosta, 21, born in Monteroni, son of Francisco Gomez d'Acosta and Florentia Vaaz. On the popularity of the *Flos Sanctorum* among crypto-Jews, see David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 430.
25. ACDF, St.St. BB 3-b, ff. 687, 794–795, 1140–1146; Francesco Bianco's certificate of baptism, signed by the prior of the Neapolitan *Congrega dei Catecumeni* and dated June 5, 1618 is at ff. 805–806.
26. *Ibid.*, ff. 687, 1109–1114, 1133–1140, 1206–1208.
27. *Ibid.*, ff. 1213–1219.
28. *Ibid.*, ff. 753–754.
29. *Ibid.*, f. 850.
30. *Ibid.* 581–591; Sirago, "L'inserimento," 139–140; the penalty of *carcere perpetuo*, or life imprisonment, was rarely followed to the letter, and condemned

- prisoners were usually able to successfully appeal for reductions after several years: Tedeschi, "Preliminary Observations," 3–21.
31. Vincenzo Lavenia, "I beni dell'eretico, i conti dell'inquisitore. Confische, stati italiani, economia del Sant'Uffizio," in *L'Inquisizione e gli storici: un cantiere aperto* (Rome: Accademia dei Lincei, 2000) 47–94; Id., "Gli ebrei e il fisco dell'Inquisizione. Tributi, espropri e multe tra il '500 e '600," in *Le Inquisizioni Cristiane e gli Ebrei*, 325–356.
  32. Archivio di Stato, Venezia, Dispacci, Napoli, filza 77, no.176; Innocenzo Fuidoro, *Giornali di Napoli*, ed. Franco Schlitzer (Napoli: Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, 1934), 1: 75–79.
  33. I used three exemplars of the *Raggioni per la fedelissima città di Napoli negli affari della Santa Inquisizione*, the two printed copies in BNN, ms. XI C-37, ff. 320–325 and ms. XI C-46, ff. 1–6 and the manuscript in BNN, ms. XI C 12, ff. 46–67. Regarding the date on which the pamphlet was released: The Venetian ambassador reported it as October 25 (ASVenice, dispacci 77, no. 217), and on December 6 a bounty was offered to anyone who could identify the treatise's author: Fuidoro, *Giornali di Napoli*, 1: 76.
  34. Fuidoro, *Giornali di Napoli*, 1: 97; Sirago suggests that the author of the tract was Giacomo Capece Galeota, a noted jurist who continuously took the side of the royal jurisdiction in a long career as a lawyer and bureaucrat: "L'inquisizione a Napoli nel 1661," 440–441; see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, s.v. Capece Galeota, Giacomo.
  35. BNN, ms. XI E 15, ff. 145–166: "Allegatione giuridica del dottor Roberto Mazzucci...", f. 155.
  36. Sirago, "L'Inquisizione a Napoli nel 1661," 452; BNN, ms. XI C 37, f. 337–339; Fuidoro, *Giornali di Napoli*, 1: 129.
  37. The numerous pamphlets, treatises, and legal briefs concerning the 1661 controversy represent a rare instance of civil debate over the role of the Inquisition in seventeenth century Italy and deserve a separate investigation. See in particular the materials in BNN, ms. XI C 12, ms. XI C 37, ms. XI C 46, and ms. X E 15.
  38. ACDF, St. St. BB 3-b, ff. 699–702, 713–718, 720–721, 1269–1272, 1292–1303; Silvio and Ascanio Corona, "Successi diversi occorsi ai Napoletani," BNN, ms. XVIII.3, ff. 191–199; Confuorto, "Notizie d'alcune famiglie popolari," BNR, ms. V.E.1307, ff. 91–94.

## Conclusion

1. Ferorelli, *Gli Ebrei nell'Italia Meridionale*, 243.
2. Giuseppe Galasso, *Napoli spagnola dopo Masaniello: politica, cultura, società* (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), in particular 175–208, 267–480.
3. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora*, 533–584.



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